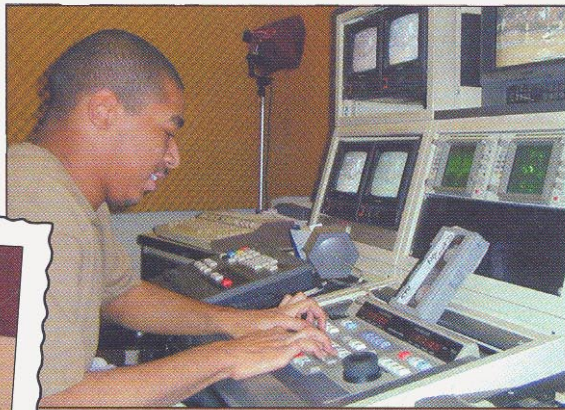
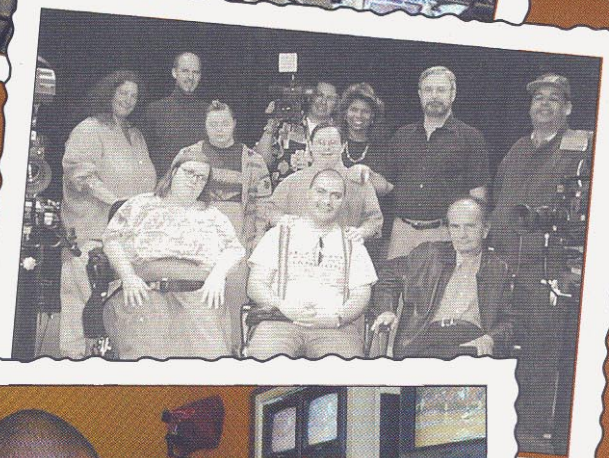
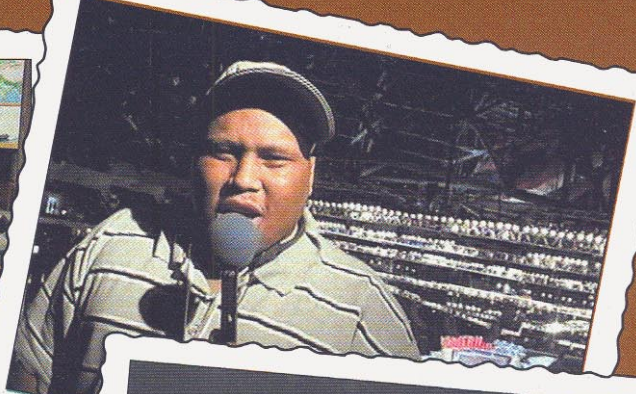


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Access-ability of
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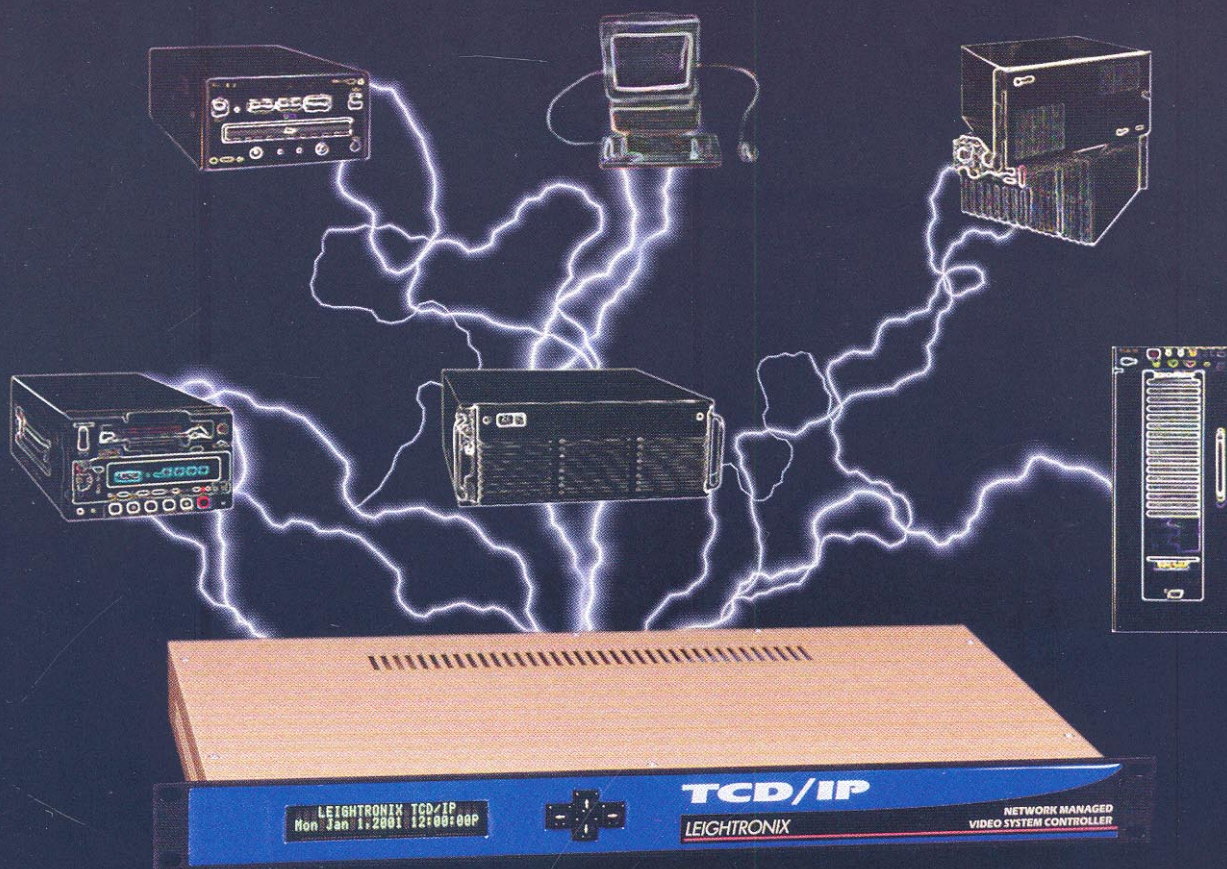
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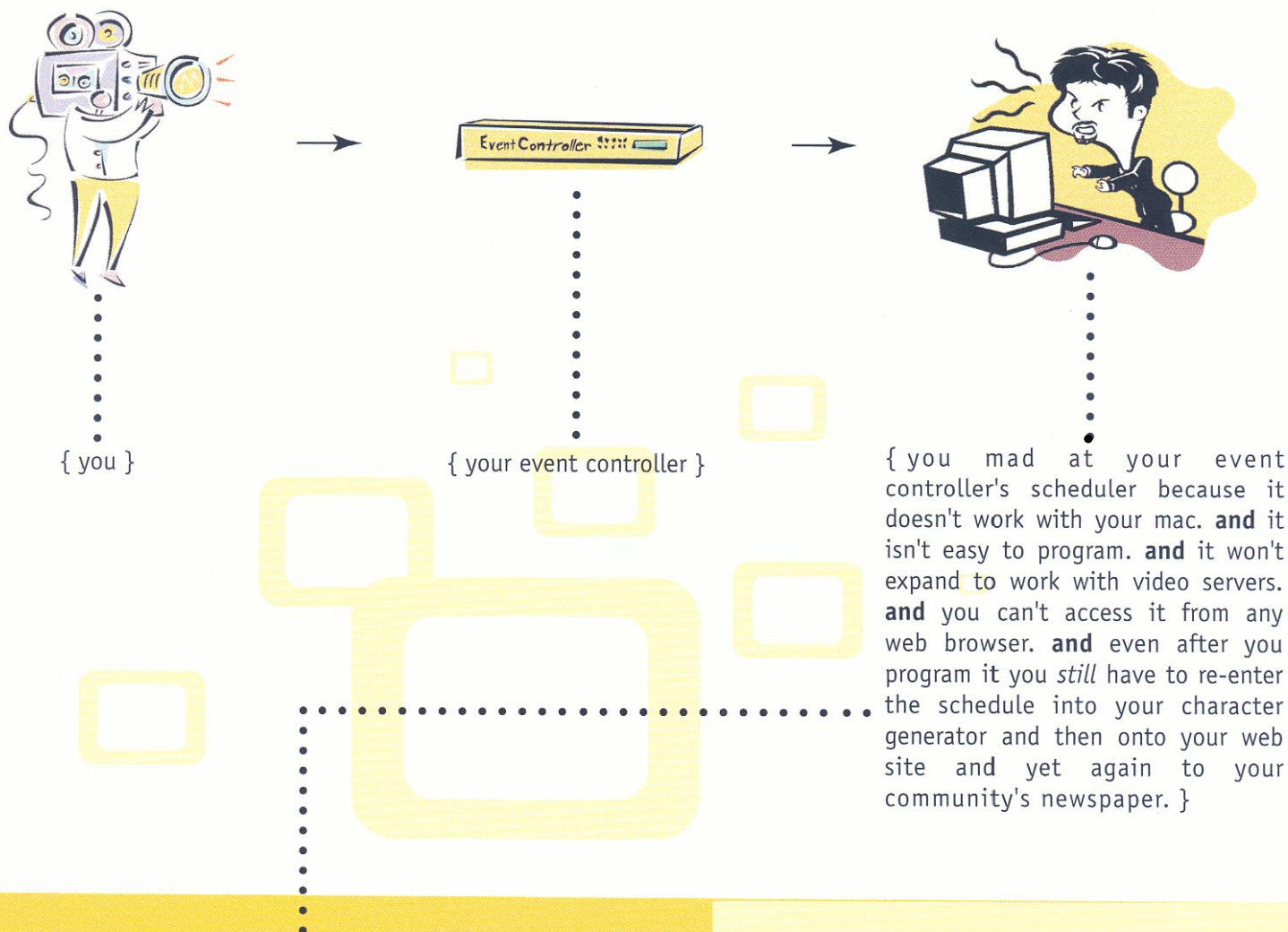
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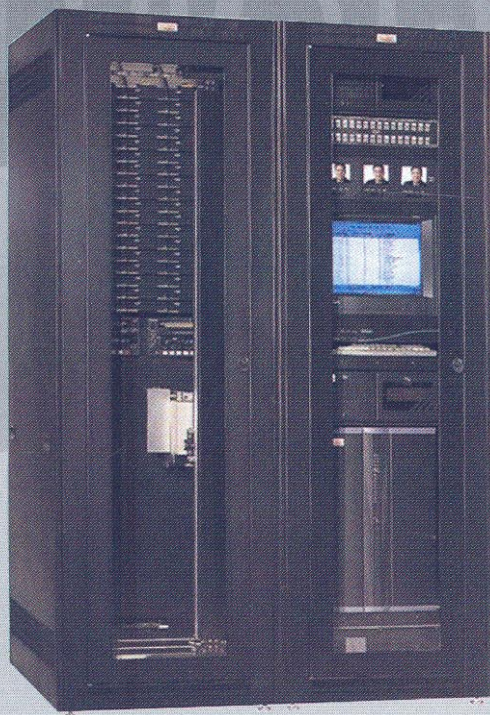
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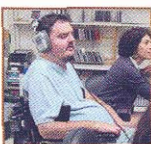


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As the journal of the Alliance for Community Media, COMMUNITY MEDIA REVIEW shall support the Alliance mission by providing: a comprehensive overview of past, present and future issues critical to the Alliance and its membership; vigorous and thoughtful debate on those issues; and a venue for members and like-minded groups to present issues critical to the Alliance.

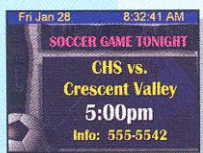
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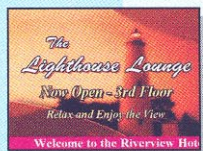
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Requiem for a Media Activist

John Luvender Was the Conscience of Three Centers

John Thomas Luvender became a peace activist by travelling that hardest of roads, through first hand contact with the horrors of war.

Born in Pennsylvania in 1947, he did what thousands of young men did in the late '60s, he joined the Army to go to fight in Vietnam. John rarely spoke about those experiences, although he had nightmares about them until his death Easter morning this past March after a long struggle with liver disease, which he often attributed to his time in Vietnam.

Like so many Vietnam veterans at the time, he felt betrayed by his fellow countrymen. The deafening lack of gratitude to those whose lives were changed forever cut deep. Angry, he gravitated to Vietnam Veterans Against the War and sought growth in working for peace. He was a charter member of the MGen Smedley Butler Brigade, the Veterans for Peace Chapter of Boston, Massachusetts.

It was around then that he found his way to Public access. He quickly grasped the importance of the tools he had discovered and made a powerful program with fellow veterans called *A Matter of Conscience*, candid conversations about their Vietnam experiences and the need to explore alternatives to war. For the rest of his life the common thread of his actions would be to promote peace and shape a better world for his daughter Molly.

John and his wife Victoria produced a large body of work together. One piece that beautifully expresses their interest in exploring peaceful traditions and building cultural bridges is a tape they did with Slow Turtle—Russell Peters, president of the Elder Council of Wampanoag Indians—about their traditional clam bake. The tape and a companion children's book are still used New England schools.

John was a community builder, although he never would have called himself that. He laid the cornerstone of peace activism at three Community Media Centers that he was pivotal in creating: one in the east—Malden Access Television (MATV) 1988 to 1992, and two in the west—Berkeley Access TV and the Santa Rosa Community Media Center, 1996-until his death in 2002.

John's work in access was done quietly. He practiced the wisdom of watching something unfold, stepping in to help at just the right moment, and never losing sight of the importance of making it fun.

During the Gulf War, John worked with Deep Dish TV and Paper Tiger on the Gulf Crisis TV Project, which coordinated a multi-system discussion around opposition to Desert Storm.

I close with Laurie Cirivello's words at John's memorial celebration, fittingly held in the studio John built at the Santa Rosa Community Media Center.

"By the time John came to Santa Rosa, he possessed a wealth of experience about the practical matters of making community media work...But as we worked together, I came to understand what else John could offer this new center for community media...through example, he helped ground us. He did it by basing his work and life on things that matter—the importance of family, playing fair, being open to new ideas, listening to others, laughing, and actively working to make the community and the world a better place.

"When interviewing potential employees for the media center, I always ask folks to describe themselves using just three words—no more, no less. As long as I live, I will never forget John's response: "Head, hands and heart".

"Little did I know then, how perfect that description was.

"John has left an incredible legacy and I am humbled. I am grateful for his friendship and all he taught me. I will miss him very much."

— Rika Welsh

Surviving the Media Exploitation

BY BUNNIE RIEDEL

An old high school chum of mine, who is now a family therapist living in the Houston area, sent out an email entitled "How to Survive Media Exploitation of 9-11." I thought it an interesting convergence of our lives considering what I now do. This friend has several book credits to her name, has been a guest on some of the country's major talk shows and specializes in recovery in all its forms from drug and alcohol dependency to relationship and family abuse. Her practice is about helping people live fuller, more healthy lives.

The email she sent was about taking care of yourself in the face of the 9-11 media onslaught. She wrote "News shows have begun pounding viewers with scenes of 9-11 events and television as a whole, from news shows, to educational channels, are focusing programming whole-heartedly on these events. Businesses are creatively finding ways to "use" the 9-11 one-year anniversary to "beef up" sales. Of course most of these businesses would never come clean about this. Sadly, such exploitation belittles the events of 9-11 and triggers feelings of hurt, anguish and pain for many Americans impacted by this ordeal."

My friend went on, "With the year anniversary of 9-11 quickly approaching, media coverage and bombardment, in the form of magazines, newspapers, radio programming, commercialization, books and television programming is increasing. With the rise in proliferation of the 9-11 related sales tactics and other activities, the workload of professionals like myself is also on the rise. Feeling the feelings, slowly sorting out emotions related to grief, is important but being overwhelmed with triggers can be abusive. In order to combat this I have put together a number of survival tips for those I work with."

She then provided a list of seven suggestions aimed at adults, children and those with special problems, such as drug or alcohol abuse. She called her list "Surviving 9-11 Anniversary Triggers and Commercialization." I read her email and thought her advice sound, helpful and very much needed. I was proud to know a woman with such insight, sensitivity and

There is no doubt that many of you have had programming that sought to provide comfort and psychological healing to those who have known loss and those of us who grieve with them. I was thrilled to give the FCC examples of how Public, Educational and Government access television responded to 9-11, and proud when I saw your stories reflected in an FCC report to Congress.



the life-long dedication to helping others.

Then, there was another email. It was from the news director of a network affiliate in the Southwest. The news director wrote "Since you are sending this to (the affiliate), I assume your anti-media comments are directed at us. As an FYI, (the network) will lose an estimated 6 million dollars of revenue because advertisers do NOT want to run commercials and (the network) does not want to run them. That sensitivity is missing in your letter."

My friend wrote that obviously the news director had missed the point. I wrote back "wow."

As we crossed the threshold of an anniversary of one of the most terrible events in American history, I looked back at the year and how access television responded. We have never had a need to choose between decency and profit. We have never used images of tragedy to beef up our bottom line. Nor have we bemoaned a potential loss of revenue because we were forced by peer pressure not to run commercials. Instead, we have done everything we could to accommodate individuals and community groups as they responded to 9-11. We have eagerly taken programming from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the U.S. Department of Education, the Machinist's Union, the National Guard Counterdrug Program, the Air Force Outreach, Army Newswatch, the American Red Cross, the various Islamic and interfaith groups, the various police, fire and health departments, and the various protest groups. We have opened our doors to memorial services and prayer vigils and anti-war movements. We have not done any of these things because there was anything to gain by cable-casting these

programs. We have done it because it is our contribution to our country's defense, our opportunity to provide healing and our dedication to freedom of speech.

There is no doubt that many of you have had programming that sought to provide comfort and psychological healing to those who have known loss and those of us who grieve with them. I was thrilled to give the FCC examples of how Public, Educational and Government access television responded to 9-11, and proud when I saw your stories reflected in an FCC report to Congress.

It is this kind of thing, my friend's attempt to heal and a network affiliate's crude response, that once again affirms how important you are. I fully support our free-enterprise system and I understand how important it is to secure economic prosperity. Jobs, lives and families depend on economic stability. But once in a blue moon we have to look at what is right and eagerly, not regretfully or with bitterness, do the good thing.

When I was a child, my family's custom was to wear black arm bands or black dresses for one full year after a loved one had died. I would not suggest that we should have spent a year in formal mourning for the victims and heroes of 9-11. But it wasn't too much to ask that commercial media take one single day out of a whole year not to conduct business as usual. Meanwhile, it is you, with all your thousands of television channels, that will continue to serve the public interest and continue to build a better community through media.

Bunnie Riedel is executive director of the Alliance for Community Media. Contact her at briedel@alliancecm.org

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Thank You Access

BY JOHN ROCCO

It was 1968 and a four-year-old boy sat in front of a 25-inch Magnavox console television watching Bob Barker host *Truth Or Consequences*. The images flashing across that screen and the fun being had by Mr. Barker and his audience mesmerized the youngster. Continued viewing of Barker and other game show legends, such as Bill Cullen, Monty Hall and Tom Kennedy, only served to further his desire to enter the glamorous world of television.

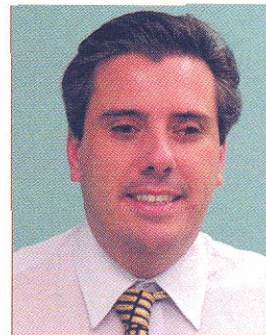
Granted, to most, game shows aren't that glamorous, but to a four-year-old all of those flashing lights, upbeat music and hyperactive people, indicated that this was the place to be. The decision was made at that time, television was the career path for this young man. It may sound incredulous, but I promise you, that is exactly how it happened.

There was only one obstacle between a dream and the reality of an exciting career in television. This small boy had a degenerative eye disease, which over time, would take his sight from him. Luckily for him however, he was taught by his parents from the beginning that anything is possible if you put your mind to it, so this visual impairment was merely an inconvenience, not a roadblock.

I tell you all of this because the four-year-old boy in this story is me, and it wasn't until I graduated from college that I began to question whether this visual impairment was merely an inconvenience. I began looking for work in broadcasting and as anyone who has tried this knows, it isn't easy. It isn't easy if you are perfectly normal, but try it with any kind of disability and see how far you get. Frustration and disappointment were my daily diet during this two year job search. Back in college I had two summer internships in New York, one with CBS News Radio and the other on the "Howard Stern Show" at NBC, but that's a whole other story. Once it became time to find paid work, the leads were few and far between.

Just when it seemed that all hope was lost, a friend told me of a new cable

I wanted to tell this story because I honestly feel that it points out exactly what access is all about, opportunity for everyone. Access allows everyone, of every conceivable background, to have a say, to be heard, to contribute to their community and to know that they are valuable.



channel beginning operations back in State College, Pennsylvania where I attended Penn State University. They were looking for an executive director to run the Government and Education access channel they were starting. So without hesitation I applied for the job. It really didn't matter that I had no idea what an access channel was or what an executive director did, but I figured if I could get this job I was on my way and my mother certainly would be happy since the word executive was in my title.

Believe it or not, but the board of that organization at the time must have known even less about what an access channel was and what an executive director did than me, because they hired this 23-year-old, visually-impaired, completely inexperienced kid. That was 15 years ago and I have since moved on from that position and now serve as executive director of Dayton Access Television and the national chair of the Alliance for Community Media.

I wanted to tell this story because I honestly feel that it points out exactly what access is all about, opportunity for everyone. Access allows everyone, of every conceivable background, to have a

say, to be heard, to contribute to their community and to know that they are valuable.

So to that first board back in Pennsylvania, thank you. To all the boards I have worked for and who have put their trust in me, thank you. To all of my employees who have had faith in me to lead them, thank you and to all of my colleagues in access who I have had the great pleasure of working with over the last 15 years, thank you. Thank you to the entire access community for allowing one small boy with a disability to reach his dream. I may have never gotten a chance to host that game show, but who cares, I'm working in television with people I respect and admire and I love it!

Oh and by the way, to those hundreds of radio and television stations and all the major networks who didn't think I could handle working there, you can still reach me in Dayton. I would be happy to politely listen to any offers, but I must tell you, my price is now a lot higher.

John Rocco is executive director of Dayton [OH] Access Television [DATV] and chair of the Alliance for Community Media. Contact him at john@datv.org

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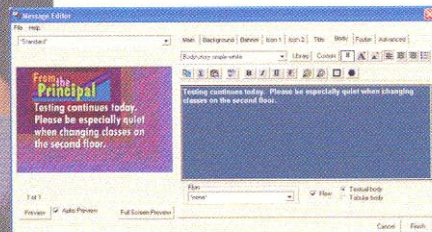
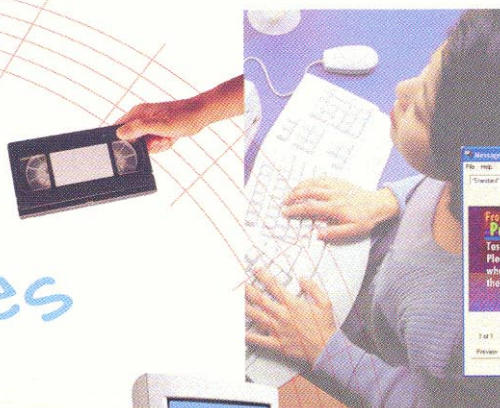
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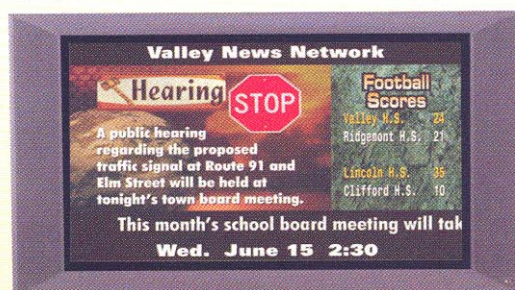


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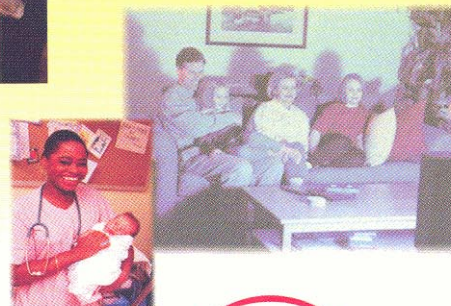
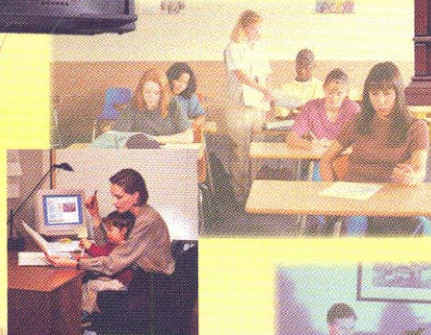
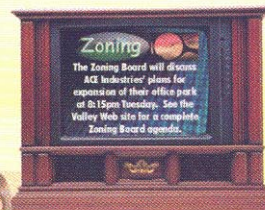
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The Autumn 2002 Community Media Review is an extension of the "Celebrate Diversity" theme the Alliance's 2002 International Conference. In the following pages, we look at how PEG centers throughout the country have made access accessible to people with disabilities, how people with disabilities are making use of that access, and highlight the Houston conference.

Jeff Hansell movingly recounts Liri Qirici's long journey from Albania in quest of a dream. **Barbara Lennon** writes about efforts in Sandwich, Massachusetts. **Rob Shoults** provides a personal account of Access Tucson's embrace of producers with disabilities. **Phyllis Varjian** reflects on the Center for Independent Living's *Access Mid-Michigan*, a public affairs program produced at Midland Cable Television. **Sherry Byrne** shares the story of one wheel-chair bound producer in Largo, Maryland. **James Horwood**, **Peter Hopkins**, **Allison Driver**, and **Melinda Claybaugh** discuss the possible application of the Americans with Disabilities Act to access. **Sejal Shah** reports on Little City Foundation's Project VITAL and People's First activities in suburban Chicago. **Robin Forte-Lincke** applauds *An Hour with Dr. Stewart*, a series produced by Peter J. Anninos at Seal Beach Community Access in Orange County, California. **Rosa Leonardi** writes about Media Literacy tours in Salem, Oregon. **Mike Everson** offers an insider's view of a video project in Sacramento, California that provides a glimpse of the lives, hopes, dreams, and challenges of people with developmental disabilities. **Cindy Colvin** offers some advice on making community television accessible. **Greg Vawter** describes how Hillsborough County, Florida makes government television accessible for its deaf and hearing-impaired viewers. **Mark Rocheleau** writes about a Fitchburg, Massachusetts show that speaks to the deaf community.

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

Access-ability of Community Media

The conference reports illustrate and reflect on our annual chance to meet, share and debate changes made and changes yet to come. **Bill Kirkpatrick** gives his perspectives on the Leadership awards, the Alliance's most prestigious acknowledgements. For a look at the Hometown Awards, read **Jim Ellinger's** take on Houston's Hollywood send up. Get in on the most current topics in access as **John Higgins** reports on two white paper discussions. Look at the conference as see from home with **Betty Francis'** report on the webcast conference. And **David Allen Lavender** gives us his perspective on the conference as a newcomer to community access.

Our thanks to everyone who volunteered their time to help us develop this issue. We hope it provides you with ideas on how you might enhance access in your community.

— Betty Francis and Marshall Parker, co-editors

Betty Francis has been involved in educational access for the last 16 years as a writer, producer, and station manager. In her current role as an IT planning analyst for Montgomery College, she assists in the development of joint initiatives for Maryland's Montgomery County PEG Network.

She can be reached at 240.314.3141 or bfrancis@mc.cc.md.us.

Marshall Parker has been a public access producer since 1990. He has been active in disabilities media for over fifteen years including being a weekly live newsreader for Taping for the Blind Radio in Houston. Parker is program development director for Houston MediaSource where he has been on staff for six years.

Contact him at 713.524.7700 ext 12 or marshallp@Houston-Mediasource.org



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The Long Journey of Liri Qirici

Assistive Technologies Makes Dream Come True for Albanian Emigré

BY JEFFREY HANSELL

Helplessly lying under the Adriatic Sea and unable to save himself, Liri decided to count to five and then simply, open his mouth.

One...seconds earlier Liri Qirici was playing soccer with friends on Durres Beach, a place his family had often visited forty-five minutes by train from their home in Tirana, Albania.

Two...as the game ended, Liri ran and flipped himself into the surf as he had done many times before. But this time, on August 6, 1989, he would not make it all the way around. Only 19 years old, he was the youngest of his family among four older brothers and sisters.

Three...in mid-air he displaced his neck and landed hard on the seafloor. His ears started to make a high pitch sound and his nose began to burn. He had lost all movement in his body. He knew that his parents, Angelina and Simon would be devastated.

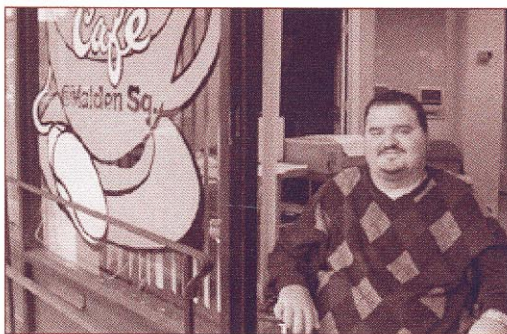
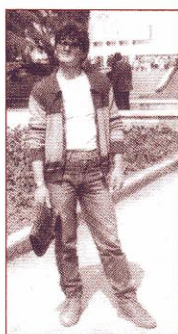
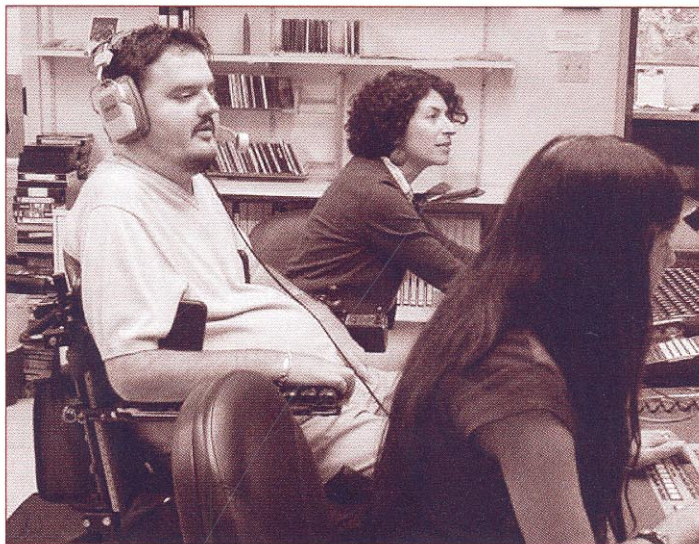
Four...Even now he still imagined himself becoming a great filmmaker. In this last moment, he saw this dream stretch across his short life.

Five...in a flash, the two hands of his best friend Oni pulled him out of the water. Liri opened his mouth and breathed air. For a long time it was all he could do, but he was alive.

Early on, as he adjusted to this new circumstance—wheelchair bound and completely dependent on others for his day-to-day survival. Liri developed a tenacious hold on life. His daily battles over what most people consider minor illness or infections would make him stronger. Through it all, his beloved family carried him over the rough spots.

For Liri's parents it soon became clear that their son's life depended upon a quality of medical care that simply was not available in Albania at that time.

So Simon, who speaks five languages and worked as a diplo-



Liri Qirici, clockwise from top, directing from MATV's production control room; in downtown Malden; as a teenager before his accident; and with his family as a small child in Albania.

mat, and Angelina, who was the chief administrator at the Institute of Folk Medicine, left their own careers and life in Albania behind and sought political asylum in the U.S. The Qiricis came to Malden, Massachusetts, a city with a long and proud tradition of welcoming immigrants to the new world. Here they would remake themselves and give Liri a chance to realize his dream.

Liri began attending the University of Massachusetts and later Boston University in pursuit of a degree in film and television. Asked once how he was able to write long term papers without being able to hold a pencil or tap a keyboard he replied: "Very slowly."

While in college, Liri produced several short films, recruiting his family and friends to act and operate the cameras and the editing equipment. He wrote the scripts, gave direction and dictated precise editing commands, all the while lifting everyone's spirits with his humor and determination.

In fall 2000, Liri graduated with honors. Shortly thereafter, Triangle, Inc., a private non-profit organization providing

employment, residential and social services to people with disabilities, came into his life and provided some crucial vocational counseling and an introduction to Malden Access TV—where he immediately began volunteering as instructor and producer.¹

It was a bit of good timing, because Liri showed up just as MATV was searching for a suitable candidate for a slot in the Boston CTC/VISTA program. With additional grant money from Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission and Easter Seals, MATV was able to bring Liri onto MATV's staff in the newly created position of community production coordinator.

This was Liri's first real job, and the beginning was not easy. Suddenly he was expected to teach production classes, tutor patrons at the newly opened Cyber Café, recruit and coordinate

Making the Extra Effort in Sandwich, Massachusetts

BY BARBARA LENNON

We are a fairly new access studio here on "ole Cape Cod," serving the 20,000-plus residents of Sandwich, Massachusetts. As our operation developed, we did everything we could to ensure that those with disabilities would have access to our studio.

We contacted our local Disabilities Committee for assistance. They supplied us with information on municipal and state laws regarding the proper amount of space needed for people with wheelchairs, walkers and/or canes.



The medical supply company that we rent space from was also very helpful. They gave us suggestions on how to outfit the studio for accessibility and allowed us discounts on things like chair rails, ramps, etc.

Now, at the Sandwich TV studio, with everything situ-

ated on the first floor, no one is left out of the action. Our platforms have ramps in the studio. All doors and their handles adhere to ADA code.

We are very proud of the accomplishments that we have made since our opening last January and producers with disabilities are a part of our production pool. One of our long-standing producers is an older gentleman who had suffered a stroke. Another of our members, although legally blind, operates a camera.

We are continuing to make accessibility a priority in the services we offer. We've produced and air a program that explains how viewers can receive a free phone from Verizon if they have certain disabilities documented by their doctor. In addition, we are in the process of recording an "audible ledger," which is the reading of a local newspaper.

Barbara Lennon is administrative director of Sandwich Community Television, Studio 28 Jan Sebastian Way, Sandwich, MA 02563, staff@sandwichtv.org.

volunteer crew members, learn how to operate MATV's video and editing gear, and become acquainted with his colleagues. Meanwhile, he had to adapt to new computer assistive technology that would eventually make him more independent.

From the start, he found his sea legs as a TV director. Plunked down in the middle of a chaotic control room and armed only with a two-way headset, Liri quickly grasped the protocol of live multi-camera production. Soon he was barking out orders, telling jokes, or simply steadying the nerves of his often novice crew with a few calm words of encouragement.

But it would be Liri's buoyant personality and unflagging drive that would keep everybody afloat and in good spirits through the inevitable glitches and missed cues as they all learned how to work together.

Later, by using a computer with extra RAM, he worked with an Easter Seals technology specialist to rig it with relatively simple software and hardware that allowed him to use email, write scripts, send faxes, and make phone calls—generally all the duties of the typical TV producer.

Through trial and error, Liri discovered that he could use assistive technology to create graphics with Scala Info Channel Designer and Adobe Photoshop. Soon after, he learned by proxy how to edit video on the Casablanca AVIO and has recently begun to use Apple's iMovie as well.

Today Liri produces and directs a new MATV show called *What Is*, a program about disease prevention, disabilities and injuries. He is devoting one episode to spinal cord injury, a subject in which he is an expert. While he wants to inform young people how to lower their risk for spinal cord injury, he also plans to show the audience how to deal with such a profound injury, learn from it, and move on with life.

Earlier this year Triangle, Inc. honored Liri with the Thomas J. Byrne Employee of the Year Award. This month, the Northeast Region of the Alliance for Community Media announced that *What Is* will be awarded first place in its category at the region's *5th Annual Fall Video Festival*.

It has been a long journey for Liri, but perhaps, he has nearly arrived.

NOTES

Liri Qirici, liri@matv.org

<http://www.triangle-inc.org>

<http://www.easter-seals.org>

¹Triangle, Inc. is a private non-profit organization providing employment, residential and social services to people with disabilities. Located in Malden, Massachusetts, Triangle serves nearly 600 people from 51 Eastern Massachusetts communities. Triangle was founded in 1971 by citizens in the community who believed that people with disabilities could learn to lead more independent and dignified lives. Today, Triangle maintains a focus on ability and potential rather than disability.

Jeffrey Hansell is executive director of MATV in Malden, MA, and the next chair of the North East Region of the Alliance for Community Media. Contact him at jeff@matv.org

Where There's a Will There's a Way in Tucson

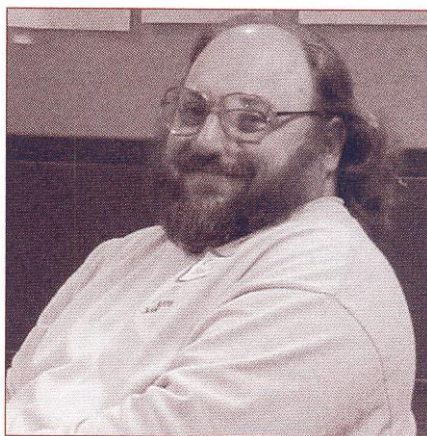
BY ROB SHOULTS

One day you decide to visit your local access center. You walk in to the studio and see a seasoned crew in motion. Over on your left, two people set lights, one on a ladder and a spotter on the floor. In the back, two people lay out audio cables and hook up microphones. Over on the right, a couple more people position the cameras.

Then you notice that the floor spotter for the lighting is in a wheelchair. Wait, the audio people are signing to each other. There is a Seeing Eye dog by its master on a camera.

Bottom-line: anybody with any kind of a disability can work on a video crew. Now, I'm not saying this is true for every situation. If you have more than three people on a talk show set or are doing some kind of a musical event it would be difficult for a hearing-impaired individual to run audio. But as far as a vision-impaired person running a studio camera for the show—the director is their eyes. The individual on camera just needs to know that usually the zoom remote is on the right and the focus is on the left. Once the studio crew points the camera towards the set, the director can tell the cameraperson how to frame up the shot by normal means.

A person in a wheelchair can do any of the above positions on the studio floor. In the control room, he or she can run any of the equipment. They might need a head stick, but that's easy to take care of—they did exactly that here at Access Tucson to support a gentleman who had spastic Cerebral Palsy. The chief engineer at the time, Roy Knappenberger, built a wheelchair mount for the camera that could be controlled by a joystick. You could pan



'...anybody with any kind of a disability can work on a video crew.'

and tilt from the joystick control. The whole setup ran on camera batteries. Roy also built a head stick for Rob out of auto parts. I saw it myself when I became a member of Access Tucson in the late '80s.

Now that I've laid all of this out, let me tell you a little about myself. My name is Robert Shoults. I am 39 years old and have a mild case of cerebral palsy. I have been involved with public access television for 14 years, 11 of those on staff at Access Tucson. With the mild cerebral palsy that I have, I haven't needed any special equipment or modifications to work in the Tucson access facility. Even laying out camera cables for the studios is done in such a way that any one in a chair or on a scooter can do it.

From 1989-1996 my mother, Sandee Brooke, and I produced a series called *Bridges*. This was a series by, for, and about the disability community. (Over 50 percent of the production crew was dis-

abled.) *Bridges* covered everything from disability advocacy to preventing disabilities. We had on local police and fire officials talking about everything from fire safety around Christmas to bicycle safety issues. In 1993, I was awarded with a Community Impact Award by the former Mountain States Region of the Alliance.

Access Tucson supports people with disabilities. We have several developmentally disabled people working as crew. Our Project RAISE, a spin-off of Little Cities Foundation's Project VITAL (Video Intensive Training And Learning), is run by Pima County's adult education department. In addition to the instruction our Project RAISE people receive in basic reading and math, computers, art and independent living skills for adults with developmental disabilities, they've stepped up to the challenge of producing TV.

I mentioned earlier what Access Tucson had done for Rob Flannigan. Access Tucson was doing accessibility before the American's with Disabilities Act in 1996. All of the facilities in the building are fairly accessible. The edit suites and studios are completely accessible. Several years ago, the two heavy glass doors on the building were replaced with one single motorized door. Last year, the bathrooms were completely remodeled to ADA specs.

As the saying goes: Where there's a will there's a way. I don't care who you are or what you do—there are ways for ANYBODY to work on a video or television production crew. Sometimes money might have to be spent to make it work but, the point is, it can be done.

Rob Shoults is a production assistant at Access Tucson. Contact him at rob@access.tucson.org.

Looking for an Accommodation Solution?

Where do you go for information on assistive technology solutions for the producer with a visual or hearing impairment, for a production assistant who cannot use a hand operated mouse, or for the volunteer with significant physical limitations?

A quick web search produced the following sites:

Ability Hub helps users find information on adaptive equipment and alternative methods available for accessing computers. www.abilityhub.com/

ABLEDATA is a national database of information on more

than 17,000 products that are currently available for people with disabilities. www.abledata.com/

The CPB/WGBH National Center for Accessible Media site includes the Rich Media Resource Center, a collection of resources for people interested in ways to make rich media accessible to people with disabilities. <http://ncam.wgbh.org/resources>

Trace Research & Development Center conducts research aimed at improving technology by making it more accessible for people with disabilities. <http://www.trace.wisc.edu/>

A TV CILibration of Diversity!

'...building awareness of disability issues and promoting independent living'

BY PHYLLIS VARJIAN

As Missy and Ken Davert and their four-year-old twins travel the aisles of a local mid-Michigan grocery, shoppers wave "hi" and many stop to chat with Missy, a 2'10" tall, local TV personality, quite recognizable to the public, as the host of a public access TV program.

Once a month for the past five years, Melissa "Missy" Davert, executive director of the non-profit Center for Independent Living of Mid-Michigan, the CIL, has been hosting *Access Mid-Michigan*, a 30-minute public affairs program produced at Midland Cable Television (MCTV) in Midland, Michigan and distributed to local public access stations in central Michigan.

Using an interview format, Missy chats casually with all kinds of guests about disability issues on *Access Mid-Michigan*. Not too many years ago, though, before the evolution of the public access TV network, a non-profit organization could not afford to produce a TV program. Now, with MCTV operating a fully equipped studio in Midland as well as training a volunteer posse interested in producing TV shows, many non-profit organizations can broadcast their messages to thousands of viewers with immediacy and at a minimal cost.

For the CIL, this was the perfect opportunity to educate the community about its mission—building awareness of



Melissa interviewing Rep. Carl Williams of Saginaw, MI.

disability issues and promoting independent living for people with disabilities.

On February 14, 1998, Missy hosted her first edition of *Access Mid-Michigan*. The original show was a bit stilted, Missy jokes, "but, it finally came together and *Access Mid-Michigan* began its own life!"

Although Missy is a college graduate with a friendly demeanor, she had little direct TV experience and neither did any of her staff. She continually wondered—would there be enough material about disability-related topics to generate an interesting show on a monthly basis? Would the public really care about these issues? And, finally, would she be able to sustain the viewers' interest?

That's when I hooked up with *Access Mid-Michigan*. My name is Phyllis Varjian. I'm a professional writer with a diverse professional media background and disability. Although The CIL hired me in 1999 to be an educational specialist,

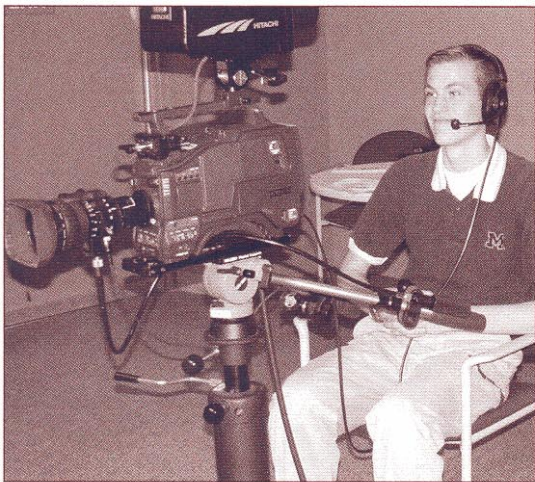
Missy realized what a great team we could be, and I assumed the producer's role of *Access Mid-Michigan*. Quickly, I began researching ideas, gathering a crew, and molding all the production elements into a workable format as well as ferrying the show to other local stations.

With its own theme song, logo, banners, and well-known host, *Access Mid-Michigan*, is one of a very few series on MCTV that is produced by a non-profit organization and maintains a regular schedule of new, monthly shows.

"MCTV is always kidding us," Missy laughs, "because we seem to have a cast of 'thousands' in their reception area waiting to appear on our shows." Guests have included artists, doctors, politicians, performers, assistive technology experts, employment counselors, inventors, architects, police officers, and students, as well as a variety of service animals and adorable four-footed creatures! The common denominator: topics and guests are



Melissa and the author.



Student camera operator Nathaniel Eldridge.

always linked to disability issues.

And, we're not confined to the studio boundary either! This past year, Aaron Ray, a recent graduate of the CIL's youth program, joined the team as a novice videographer. Now we frequently traipse around the community, camera and equipment in hand, taping stories on location. "Let's go to the video," is a phrase frequently repeated on the show by Missy as she introduces footage recorded at varied locations and events all over mid-Michigan.

Since disabilities affect practically everyone in some way, we have enough subjects for a daily talk show. And, frequently we edit and shorten segments in order to accommodate all the guests and subjects of interest to our community. We tape two months in advance, and cover two or three topics per show, depending on the complexity of the issues.

Our show is informational, not confrontational. Many times, I have had to explain to potential guests the informational mission of our show before they were willing to appear and discuss a controversial issue. With *Access Mid-Michigan*, we're not trying to be a *60 Minutes*, but rather educational programming, brimming with useable information—for our target audience, people with disabilities, and the general public in mid-Michigan.

Each show has a sign language interpreter. Since we were unable to afford costly closed-captioning, a flat fee per show was negotiated with the signer, and their organization, Voices Inc., receives a program credit. All other TV elements—graphics, props, music, banners, and scripts—were donated or we created ourselves. Creative collaboration, rather than

dollars, is our bottom line!

Although *Access Mid-Michigan* does not have paid advertisers, it is the CIL's most cost and time effective promotional /educational tool for "selling" the CIL, a "grass roots" non-profit. Our show is aired somewhere in mid-Michigan everyday, and through the use of MCTV's production studio and air time, and the great technical direction from MCTV staff, our costs are far less than producing our quarterly newsletter with its 1,000 or so subscribers. Costs aside—you just can't beat TV for developing an immediate awareness of issues!

In the past, commercial broadcasting has portrayed people with disabilities stereotypically, emphasizing a person's disability disproportionately to the person's actual abilities. And, news stories frequently single out people with disabilities as "inspirational" when they only achieve what mainstream people would consider ordinary, thereby painting a picture of people with disabilities as being "helpless." *Access Mid-Michigan* is different. We promote people with disabilities as just another diverse segment of our population. Disabilities are a part of our lives, but not our entire lives.

More than 50 percent of the people employed by the CIL, including those working on *Access Mid-Michigan*, have disabilities. As Missy says, "By showing people with disabilities working successfully in professional and social arenas, we

are changing the public's attitudes about disabilities, far more than a commercial TV program which might distort a person's disability to fit a story line. By hosting *Access Mid-Michigan*, people see Missy as an intelligent, vivacious woman, rather than just a 2'10" tall person with a disability! And, Missy is enjoying the CILiberty status generated and sustained by being a local media personality!

Although roughly 20 percent of the US population has significant disabilities, only two TV programs in Michigan focus exclusively on the issues of people with disabilities. As of today, over 60 individual *Access Mid-Michigan* programs have been produced and aired over 1200 times across central Michigan to an audience of over 100,000 viewers per month. And this fall, MCTV honored our program with the Midland Community Voice Award for creative use of the media.

With Davert in front of the camera, and Varjian behind it, a synergism has been formed that will take *Access Mid-Michigan* into a new century of digitized equipment and a demographically aging audience of people with disabilities. And, as usual, *Access Mid-Michigan* will continue to *CILibrate* our true diversity!

Phyllis Varjian has worked in radio, TV and print for the past 30 years as a commercial producer, newscaster, writer and editor. In addition to her work with Access Mid-Michigan, she is an adjunct college instructor and playwright. Contact her at varjian@cilm.org.



Director Nick Lille (right) and volunteer Tim Ogden run audio.

ADA and Access¹

'PEG...may fall within the purview of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990'

BY JAMES N. HORWOOD, PETER HOPKINS, ALLISON DRIVER,
MELINDA CLAYBAUGH²

PEG access entities may fall within the purview of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. §§12101, *et seq.*) ("ADA"). As such, they are required to make accommodations for individuals with statutorily-defined disabilities,³ or face liability for failing to do so. Some of them may be required to comply with ADA requirements governing employee/employer relationships. The ADA does not apply to employer/employee arrangements where the employer has less than 15 employees; therefore, the employee coverage provisions will not be discussed here. This article discusses the possible application of the ADA pertaining to access to public services and building facilities providing those services, including requirements for compliance, exceptions to those requirements, and enforcement mechanisms.⁴

Title II: Public Services. This Title applies to "public entities" and their treatment of "qualified individuals with disabilities."⁵ Public entities may not discriminate against such individuals because of their disabilities. This covers excluding people from participating in, or otherwise denying them the benefits of, the services, programs, or activities of the public entity, because of their disability. 42 U.S.C. § 12132. To comply, public entities must make "reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability..."²⁸ C.F.R. §35.130. Public entities may be exempted from the mandates under this Title if they can "demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity."²⁸ C.F.R. §35.130. The burden, however, is on the entity to show that the proposed accommodation is not reasonable.

Public entities must also "operate each service, program, or activity so that [it], when viewed in its entirety, is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities."²⁸ C.F.R. §35.150. This includes making changes to existing facilities and complying with regulations regarding new construction. ²⁸ C.F.R. §§ 35.150 and 35.151. While this mandate appears expansive, there are several exceptions. A public entity is not required to "necessarily...make each of its existing facilities accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities."⁶ Also, it may be exempt if it can show that taking action "would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a service, program, or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens."²⁸ C.F.R. §35.150. This may be a difficult test to meet, however, because it is not an "absolute defense," nor does it "relieve a public entity of all obligations to individuals with disabilities." ²⁸ C.F.R. Pt. 35, App. A. If a public entity can prove that an accommodation would fundamentally alter a service of activity, it must nonetheless "take any other steps necessary to ensure that individuals with disabilities receive the benefits or services provided by the public entity." *Id.* The ADA does not include a definition of "services, programs, or

activities," however; the provision of PEG programming may well qualify as a "service, program or activity."⁷

A city would qualify as a public entity under the "state or local government" clause, but a non-profit organization established for the purpose of providing PEG access would have to be construed as an "instrumentality of the state" in order to come within the statute's purview. The ADA itself does not define what qualifies as an instrumentality. Courts have looked at the extent to which the organization is funded by the state, the extent to which the board of the organization is comprised of state officials, and the extent to which the state has delegated its duties to the organization.⁸

Title III: Public Accommodations and Services Operated by Private Entities. Title III of the ADA applies to private actors. It addresses two groups—"public accommodations" and "commercial facilities"—and explicitly exempts "public entities."

Definitions. Under Title III, in order to qualify as a public accommodation, an entity must be a "facility, operated by a private entity, whose operations affect commerce" and also fall within one of twelve categories. While cable operators are likely to meet the first part of the test, they do not easily fit into one of the numbered categories, which focus on *kinds* of activities such as "place of exhibition or entertainment," "place of public gathering," "place of public display or collection." ²⁸ C.F.R. §36.104. On the other hand, cable operators are likely to qualify as commercial facilities, because their operations "affect commerce," and their facilities "are intended for nonresidential use by a private entity." ²⁸ C.F.R. §36.104.

Public Accommodations. If facilities of cable operators were deemed public accommodations, the general prohibitions of Title III (found at 42 U.S.C. § 12182) would apply. These prohibitions are similar to those of Title II, but apply to private actors instead of public actors. In order to avoid discriminatory practices, entities are required to "make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures, when such modifications are necessary" unless they can demonstrate that "such modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of such goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations."

In addition, public accommodations are required to make physical changes to improve access for individuals with disabilities. First, they must "take such steps as may be necessary to ensure that no individual with a disability is excluded, denied services, segregated or otherwise treated differently than other individuals because of the absence of auxiliary aids and services." However, if "taking such steps would fundamentally alter the nature of the good, service, facility, privilege, advantage, or accommodation being offered or would result in an undue burden,"⁹ then the accommodation is not necessary. Second, entities must "remove architectural barriers, and communication barriers that are structural in nature, in existing facilities," in order to accommodate persons with disabilities. Although this requirement can be avoided if the removal is not readily achievable, in

such instances, the entity must use alternative methods to accommodate people.

Commercial Entities. If cable operators are deemed to be commercial entities, then separate provisions of Title III, those governing new construction and alterations to existing facilities, apply, regardless of whether the entity is also considered a public accommodation. 28 C.F.R. Pt. 36 App. B §36.104. It is considered discrimination to fail to design and build facilities that are "readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities." One exception to this requirement is if compliance would be "structurally impracticable." This is a high standard to meet. Even in a case of such extraordinary circumstances, an entity must comply to the extent that it is not structurally impracticable, or to the extent that it can comply with regard to as many disabilities as possible. 28 C.F.R. §36.401.

Any alteration¹⁰ shall be made so that, "to the maximum extent feasible, the altered portions of the facility are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs." 28 C.F.R. §36.402. Alterations do not include "normal maintenance, reproofing, painting or wallpapering, asbestos removal, or changes to mechanical and electrical systems," unless they "affect the usability of the building or facility." The language "to the maximum extent feasible" is to be construed narrowly and is intended only to provide respite in the "occasional case where the nature of an existing facility makes it virtually impossible to comply fully with applicable accessibility standards through a planned alteration." 28 C.F.R. §36.402.

How PEG providers fit within this scheme. It can be argued that cities providing access will be deemed to fall under Title II, and cable operators providing access come under Title III. For the third category of providers, non-profit organizations, the statutory landscape is more confused. Reading Title II with Title III, it seems likely that a city-funded non-profit will not be double-counted under both Titles. If the non-profit is considered a "public entity" under Title II, then it is explicitly excluded under Title III. Likewise, if the non-profit is not a "public entity," then it may fall under the Title III provisions governing private entities. The main difference between these two Titles appears to be that entities coming under Title II are not required, under Title II, to make the physical accommodations described in detail in Title III. The language of Title II does not go into great detail and, without clarification, requires public entities to implement whatever accommodations are necessary to make their programs and services accessible to individuals with disabilities. It is possible that this language may be construed to require guaranteed physical access. It is possible that more than one entity will be simultaneously responsible for making PEG access and the facilities used to produce it comply with ADA requirements.

Enforcement. The ADA provides several avenues for enforcement. Any person believing s/he has been discriminated against or may be subject to discrimination in the future may institute a civil action for injunctive relief or another kind of order. 28 C.F.R. §36.501. The U.S. Attorney General may commence a civil suit in a U.S. District Court upon reasonable cause to believe that a person or group of persons is engaged in a "pattern or practice" of discrimination or that a person or group of persons was discriminated against and the discrimination raises an issue of general public importance. 28 C.F.R. § 36.503.

Courts may grant equitable relief, which may include providing an auxiliary aid or service, modifying a policy, practice, or procedure, or making facilities accessible to individuals with disabilities. They may also award other kinds of relief as they see fit, including monetary damages (not to include punitive damages), when requested by the Attorney General. Finally, they may assess civil penalties against the offending party. 28 C.F.R. §36.401. The ADA also provides for the award of attorney's fees to prevailing parties.

Notes

¹ This article is based on a portion of papers presented by Mr. Hopkins at the Alliance for Community Media Annual Conference in July 2002 and by Mr. Horwood at the NATOA National Conference in September 2002.

² James N. Horwood is a partner in the Washington, D.C. law firm of Spiegel & McDiarmid where he specializes in telecommunications, First Amendment and energy law. He has served since 1990 on the Board of Directors of the Alliance for Community Media as Special Appointee, Legal Affairs. Mr. Hopkins is also a partner at Spiegel & McDiarmid, Ms. Driver is an associate and Ms. Claybaugh was a summer associate with the firm in 2002.

³ "Disability" is: "(A) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such an individual; (B) a record of such an impairment; or (C) being regarded as having such an impairment." 42 U.S.C. §12102.

⁴ For more specific and up-to-date information, see: <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm>.

⁵ Section 12131 defines "public entity" as "(A) any State or local government; (B) any department, agency, special purpose district, or other instrumentality of a State or States or local government..."

⁶ Indeed, "[s]tructural changes in existing facilities are required only when there is no other feasible way to make the public entity's program accessible." 28 C.F.R. Pt. 35, App. A.

⁷ In *Johnson v. City of Saline*, 151 F.3d 564 (6th Cir. 1998), the court found that the former operator of a city's public access cable station had standing under the ADA because "services, programs, or activities" includes all government activities, including public contracting.

⁸ See, e.g., *Holmes v. City of Aurora*, 1995 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 453 (N.D. Ill. 1995); *Pottgen v. Missouri State High Sch. Activities Ass'n*, 857 F. Supp. 654 (E.D. Mo., *rev'd on other grounds*, 40 F.2d 933 (8th Cir. 1994)); *Dennin v. Connecticut Interscholastic Ath. Conf.*, 913 F.Supp 663, 670 (1996).

⁹ "Undue burden" is defined as "significant difficulty or expense," and will be determined by considering such factors as, "(1) [t]he nature and cost of the action needed under this part; (2) [t]he overall financial resources of the site...; the number of persons employed at the site; the effect on expenses and resources; legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for safe operation..." and other considerations relating to a parent corporation or entity, if applicable. 28 C.F.R. §36.104.

¹⁰ An Alteration includes, but is not limited to, "remodeling, renovation, rehabilitation, reconstruction, historic restoration, changes or rearrangement in structural parts or elements, and changes or rearrangement in the plan configuration of walls and full-height partitions." 28 C.F.R. §36.402.

Reality TV from a Different Reality

Kiss My TV Show an Award Winning Example of Inclusion

BY SEJAL SHAH

The recent trend within the television industry is that of reality-based programming. Reality TV owes its success to the fact that it took the mystery out of TV. The “stars” were everyday people, doing everyday things, whose emotions, ideas, and situations were something to which we could all relate. It is that idea, that our common experiences transcend stereotypes and labels, that became the impetus for the *Kiss My TV Show*, produced and directed by people with developmental disabilities.

Kiss My TV Show begins with a roaring guitar riff demanding all in earshot to “listen up”! Kiss evolved out of Project VITAL (Video, Induced, Training, And Learning) and takes its message to the streets by using roving reporters and shooting on location, in places such as Lake Michigan, the Chicago Cultural Center, and even the Democratic National Convention.

What makes *Kiss* an excellent vehicle for illustrating that people with challenges are capable covering of a wide range of topics is that we select topics that are universal (technology, art, love and dating, and politics) and the program features the community at large.

The idea to incorporate people with developmental disabilities into television programming first came via a documentary filmmaker who wanted to do a story about people with disabilities. When he visited the people receiving services at our 56 acre Little City Campus located in suburban Chicago, the project was greeted with enthusiasm. The exuberance the residents of Little City demonstrated in front of the camera led to the possibility that people with disabilities could be placed behind the camera.

A resulting program to teach people with disabilities how to use video equipment took shape; and Project VITAL was born.

A relationship with community access television centers seemed a natural. Access centers were a resource that was available and they were receptive to this new idea. A parallel curriculum

was developed that helped the trainers at the community access centers to understand how to teach various aspects of video and television production to people with disabilities. The students were required to complete 14 classes that dealt with basic studio skills, portable camera and deck skills, camcorder



Kiss My TV reporter John Porter from the convention floor.

skills, editing, and others. The information enabled any one to take part in a basic video production class, anywhere.

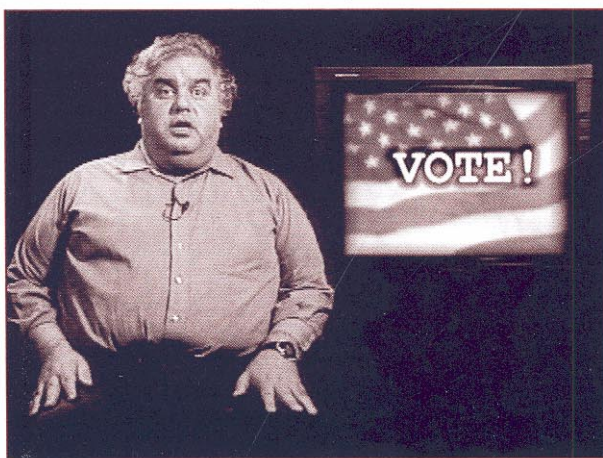
At first, the vocational aspects of Project VITAL were what people thought most important. The participants were dealing with challenging information that required focusing skills and, often times, extraordinary efforts. Students were in a professional work environment so they had to come prepared, well groomed, and ready to work together.

Students soon had the proper skills, but needed a forum to practice what they'd learned. Then they had an idea, modeled on the theory: “if you build it, they will come”. A talk show called *Wishes and Ideas* was created both as a way for the newly-graduated VITAL students to perfect their craft, and to complete the circle of putting people with disabilities in front of the camera. The show encouraged individuals to talk about what they hoped for and to express their thoughts on a wide range of topics. Oftentimes, from these conversations, individuals developed an action plan to achieve their wishes or ideas. Indeed, this show was actually making people's dreams come true.

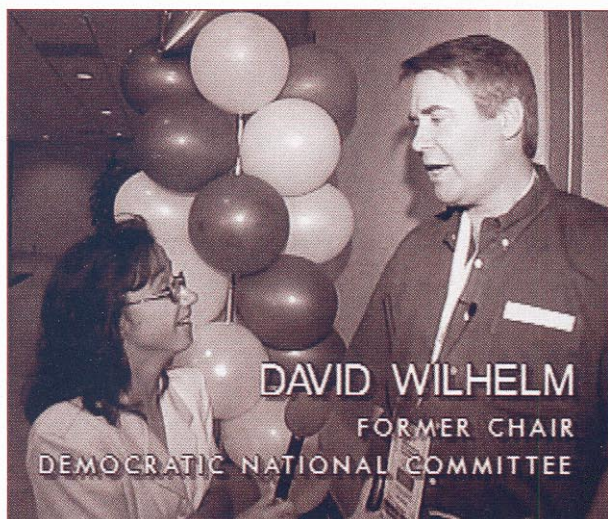
Armed with so much information, and with a medium that was just as new to them as it was to others, the desire for self-expression evolved. Several VITAL students went on to produce independent videos telling the stories of their

lives while others were concurrently working on experimental projects. It was here, that the students earned the moniker “artist.”

Project VITAL students produced and directed themselves in their creations. And people were not only listening, they were



Studio host Larry Alanis.



Kiss My TV reporter Lisa Andrea with David Wilhelm; former chair Democratic National Committee.

acknowledging them. Though the practical work aspect was lauded in the media at first, the student soon found acclaim elsewhere. Between 1990 and 1997, the program was the recipient of several prestigious awards including the Silver Apple Award, Chicago International Film Festival Award, Golden Apple Award, and four Hometown Video Festival Awards. In 2000, the Project won five first place awards for entries in the Alliance's *Hometown Video Awards*, first place at the *19th Annual Media Access Awards* in the TV News Magazine/Special category, and an honorable mention for *Kiss The Vote 2000* in the election category.

The theory of inclusion, which encourages people with disabilities to live and work alongside people without disabilities, is a key tenet of Little City Foundation's philosophy. And the *Kiss My TV Show* has fully synthesized this idea in a way that people can't ignore. Using new technology, Little City Foundation currently has a micro radio station and has produced several CDs including music, comedy and interviews.

After a brief hiatus from production to encourage creative experimentation, there has been a resurgence in the desire to be heard. But this time the message is different. The next generation of programming is under the auspices of the People's First group, which advocates for the rights of people with disabilities and encourages the use of People First Language.

People First Language teaches individuals to address a person first, not his or her disability. This way, recognition is given to the person, and not the disability. What started out almost 20 years ago as a cry for people to "Give us a chance" is now more resolute. It is a declaration that shouts, "We know our rights and we demand to be heard."

With the help of community access television, talented artists and staff and our ever growing media arts program, Little City continues to ensure that people with disabilities will have the opportunity to be *seen* and *heard*.

Sejal Shah is project coordinator at Little City Foundation and can be reached at SShah@littlecitcity.org.

Access = Opportunity at Largo, Maryland's CTV Channel 76

BY SHERRY BYRNE

Since childhood, Darryl Acty watched television and wondered how the images he saw were created. Although Darryl is wheelchair-bound, and has some dexterity problems with his right hand, he pursued his interests as a student at American University, where he studied broadcasting and television production.

After college, he began looking for job opportunities and saw an ad for production courses on Largo, Maryland's CTV Channel 76 community bulletin board.

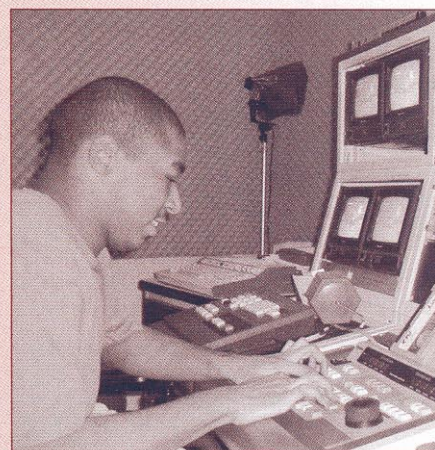
CTV's production training gave Darryl the opportunity to participate in practical demonstrations working with camera operation, lighting, sound and editing. Some things seemed challenging at first. "I thought I wouldn't be able to operate the controls on the camera," Darryl said.

However, now he knows that with practice, he is capable of operating all of the equipment in the studio.

Since completing CTV's production classes, Darryl has volunteered on several studio productions, operating audio, camera, character generator and VTR. He has also volunteered more than 70 hours so far in 2002 editing projects with other producers. His next goal is to be a technical director, and he says that volunteering at CTV is giving him the opportunity to gain more experience editing and working on studio productions.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to all dedicated volunteers, such as our own Darryl Acty!

Sherry Byrne is executive producer at Community Television of Prince Georges, Largo, Maryland. Contact her at sabyrne@iamdigex.net



In Seal Beach, California

An Hour with Dr. Stewart

BY ROBIN FORT-LINCKE

At Seal Beach Community Television in California, SBTV-3, we are like many of the PEG facilities around the country—we're longtime members of the Alliance and dedicated to bringing their communities together through local programming. SBTV-3 encourages participation in public access, promotes quality programming produced at SBTV-3, and provides the communication link between the citizens of Seal Beach and their community organizations, schools and government. In addition, we ensure the First Amendment rights of freedom of speech as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution in the operation of the community programming facilities.

SBTV-3 is blessed with a group a very hard-working and committed public access producers, some of whom are residents of the Leisure World retirement

monthly by Peter J. Anninos and hosted by Dr. Sean Stewart, a marriage and family therapist who is a quadriplegic. Dr. Stewart's guests have been quite diverse in their histories and audience appeal: Celtic dancers, heart surgeons from Children's Hospital, a Catholic priest, a former presidential helicopter pilot, a Pearl Harbor survivor, women in the military, and a fellow quadriplegic are just a few of the amazing people whose presence have graced the studio in Seal Beach, California during the live cablecast.

Peter J. Anninos has been a public access producer for more than 17 years. He has produced a variety of programs over the years, including an antique car show on the longest wooden pier on the west coast. For more than 12 years, he has also produced *Talk of the Town*, a live monthly program that highlights community organizers and personalities in the community and features an unexpected appearance by a celebrity guest.

Dr. Stewart, a Seal Beach native, became a quadriplegic during a cliff-diving accident in Hawaii when he was a teenager. He and Peter have collaborated on *An Hour with Dr. Stewart* for three years. He has a special ramp that his assistant brings with him for every show, that allows him to maneuver his wheelchair onto the set.

In 2001, Peter and Sean were "blown away" by their success as first-time W.A.V.E. award participants. *An Hour with Dr. Stewart* captured three

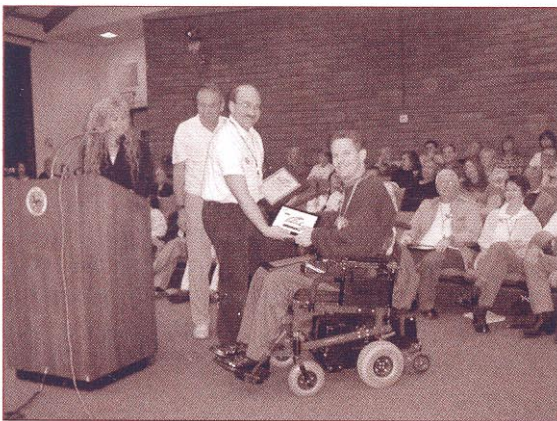


Peter and Sean and some of the crew in the studio.

finalist awards in three different categories: Documentary Profile, Community Issues and Live-to-Tape.

One of series' episodes also took first place in the religious/inspirational category. That episode centered on the amazing Renee Bondi, a singer who became a quadriplegic after falling out of bed as a young adult, and through the strength and support she found in her Catholic faith, has grown to become a popular inspirational speaker. As Sean explains, "The show (demonstrated) how accidents inspired the both of us, and tragedy was the best thing that had happened."

Another recent program featured doctors from Orange County, California who travel to Latin America to perform necessary surgeries on very ill children. And just last month, Dr. Stewart's distinguished guest was a Pearl Harbor survivor. Crew and audience could hear a pin drop as the former military man told tales of his experience and talked about how it affected his life and thousands of



SBTV-3 presentation to Peter and Sean before the Seal Beach City Council.

community. Our Leisure World producers are learning how to use a camcorder, produce three camera studio and mobile production shoots, and complete linear and non-linear editing at the young age of 60 and over!

While we feel many of our programs and producers are worthy of recognition, *An Hour with Dr. Stewart* is one program that is different in its approach to a talk show format.

An Hour with Dr. Stewart is produced

Over the years, the community of Seal Beach has embraced the public access producers and the PEG facility. We all know what a struggle it is to get the public and local government to understand who we are, how we function and how important we are to the community.

others as he displayed photographs.

Not to be accused of gender bias, Dr. Stewart has also hosted several programs featuring very accomplished women. They include a program highlighting several high ranking women in the military who are based at a local military base, and presented us with a look at military life through the eyes of a female officer. A young female pilot—the only female pilot checked out on a tri-motor—provided an exciting look at aviation from a woman's perspective.

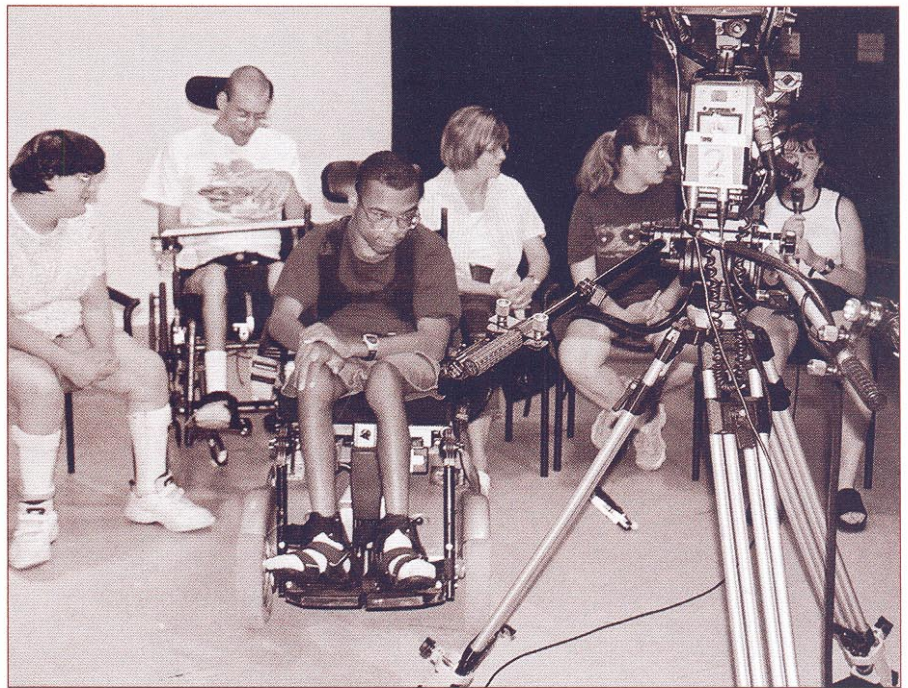
On a lighter side, Dr. Stewart's interview with the founders of a Celtic dance studio was quite interesting and entertaining since they brought their young students with them and they performed several exciting dance numbers.

Retired Lt. Col. Gene Boyer, a former presidential helicopter pilot, was a riveting guest as he candidly told tales of historic visits by some presidents and shenanigans of others. He also provided film footage of his experiences along with many photographs. Lt. Col. Boyer was in the pilot's seat during Nixon's historic visit to St. Peter's Square in Rome, as well as the famous trip from the White House following Nixon's resignation. A copy of the program is now a part of history, as it is now permanently housed in the archives of the Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace in Yorba Linda, California.

Over the years, the community of Seal Beach has embraced the public access producers and the PEG facility. We all know what a struggle it is to get the public and local government to understand who we are, how we function and how important we are to the community. Because we are a limited fixed income, we have no paid staff at SBTv-3 (besides the station manager) and despite the fact that there is no funding for public access programming, we have a very strong, supportive group of producers at SBTv-3. Each one encourages and assists the others in their efforts to bring quality community programming to their community. Many of them have been a part of the public access program for 10 years or more.

We applaud Peter, Sean and all of the producers at SBTv-3 in their continued efforts and dedication to community programming.

Robin Fort-Lincke is station manager of Seal Beach Community Television. She can be contacted at sbtv3@gte.net.



Media Literacy Tours begin in the CCTV studio.

Media Literacy Tours Acquaint Groups with CCTV in Salem, OR

BY ROSA LEONARDI

Capital Community Television (CCTV) is a private non-profit organization created to manage Public, Educational and Government television access for the City of Salem and Marion County. Here, in the state capital of Oregon, we work with numerous organizations that support the physically challenged, including the Oregon School for the Blind and the Oregon School for the Deaf.

One way in particular is with our Media Literacy Tours. The tours begin in the CCTV studio where we talk about television and the difference between commercial and non-commercial television. We then watch a video called *Buy Me That Too* which takes our visitors behind the scenes of making commercials. Students are then given the opportunity to make a message for the community. They can express themselves in anyway they like—through a song, poetry, or a statement. Our Boy Scout troops tend to make statements about what they like about being in Scouts. Other kids sing songs or send anti-drug messages.

Two groups of students from the Oregon School for the Blind recently completed a Media Literacy Tour at

CCTV. Each of these student groups made messages for the community. Their messages, overall, were thoughtful statements about September 11th. Several students told how the Blind School has helped them. One young woman recited poetry, and another talked about guide dogs for the blind, including one special dog.

CCTV has also trained several students from the Oregon School for the Deaf in TV production. One young woman was a Willamette University student who was studying theatre for the deaf. She told us that she could read lips and taught us how to communicate with her. She took our classes and eventually went on to make a video about her topic for her graduation.

We're proud that we're able to provide residents of every ability with the training and tools necessary for people to become knowledgeable and effective communicators, able to view television critically and to use television to tell their stories.

Rosa Leonardi is community development coordinator at Capital Community TV in Salem, Oregon. Contact her at rosa@cctvsalem.com.

'We can assist you in seeing the world from our perspective.'

Southside Art Center's *What We Say* Opens Doors and Eyes in Sacramento

BY MIKE EVERSON

Southside Art Center was started in 1986 by Robin and Matt Rhoades to serve adults with developmental disabilities in south Sacramento, California. Southside's mission is to create a forum that applies the medium of opportunity for people with developmental challenges, blending artistic expression, personal progress, and active citizenship toward individual empowerment. The Center has experienced extraordinary growth since its inception and is now comprised of four programs that provide support and service to approximately 160 adults with developmental disabilities.

Southside Art Center currently has four distinct program components:

▲ **Artistic Growth and Employment Program.** Our visual art classes produce artwork that is sold in galleries, and specializes in developing site-specific corporate art. The music department develops community performances as well as in-house recitals around special events and holidays.

The art programs newest class is the Public Access television production class, which puts together a program called *What We Say* (you'll learn more about that later!).

▲ **Community-Based Program.** The CBP provides for a smaller consumer to staff ratio, serving adults who need more direct supervision from staff, and have disabilities that are more challenging. CBP provides volunteer services to 14 different sites including the Sacramento Foodlink, SPCA, and the city cemetery.

▲ **Passage Program.** The Passage

Southside's mission is to create a forum that applies the medium of opportunity for people with developmental challenges, blending artistic expression, personal progress, and active citizenship toward individual empowerment.

program provides services to consumers who have significant behavioral challenges, who are unable to access any other day program in the community, and who often need a program tailored to their individual needs.

▲ **Southside, Auburn Program.** The program in Auburn serves adults with

goods and artwork. We became a significant part of the Sacramento recycling community through our sorting and recycling business seven years ago. We helped start a co-operative gallery which was instrumental in educating the public about the artistic talents of our consumers, while, at the same time, greatly

increasing our art sales. Also, we provide services to people recently placed in the community from the developmental centers or to those who have not been as successful in other community programs.

One of the latest projects to be developed is the consumer-produced TV program *What We Say*, which is one of the most unique video projects in the nation. It provides a glimpse of the lives, hopes, dreams, and



The crew of *What We Say*

challenges of people with developmental disabilities. In the words of the stars, "We can assist you in seeing the world from our perspective."

The "stars" are the cast and crew who are intricately involved in every aspect of the show from the concepts for stories, choosing music, developing narration, conducting interviews, lighting, and editing suggestions.

Southside also has an in-house recycling service that sorts and redeems material from over 150 businesses in the Sacramento area, providing employment for over 60 people per month at minimum wage or better. In fact, Southside constantly strives to develop new supports and opportunities for consumers in their programs. In 1994 Southside developed the first consumer-owned business called Dream Makers in that specialized in selling an assortment of second hand

The concept of the show began with Southside Art Center's co-founder and planning director, Matt Rhoades. In partnership with Access Sacramento, Matt provided studio training for this talented

group. "I've wanted to do this project for 15 years because it is important for people with developmental disabilities to have a voice in the media," said Rhoades. Everyone had to learn new skills such as how to operate lighting boards, studio cameras, soundboards and switches. Other challenges include writing effective dialogue, developing interview questions or working professionally in front of a camera. All of these skills help us present a show that people find enjoyable and informative.

The development of an episode of *What We Say* typically begins with everyone kicking around segment ideas that are fun or interesting. Next, a location or studio time is selected, interview questions and shooting concepts are discussed and camera training is reviewed. After the shoot, tape is reviewed, and edit notes help to guide the editor. Music and narration is selected by the group and added later. This is a tedious and time-consuming process but the results have been worth the effort.

In the four episodes completed, *What We Say* has shown fun trips to the state fair, unusual and interesting places such as the Nimbus Fish Hatchery, interviews with interesting people, art shows, the New Vision Gallery closing, a trip to select eye glasses, and a profile of *In Alliance's* work at the LaBou restaurant. A second airing of *What We Say*, featuring an *In Alliance* profile will air on Sacramento Cable Access Channel this fall.

It is the philosophy of the Southside Art Center to recognize adults with developmental disabilities as full citizens of the community who have the ability and the opportunity to contribute to society, prosper financially, and make decisions that affect their lives. For most of our consumers, their attendance at Southside represents a significant portion of the time they spend receiving the social and vocational services that enhance their lives.

Mike Everson is the associate director of Southside Art Center and oversees the Artistic Growth & Employment and Southside Auburn Programs. He is also the state advisor with People First® of California, Inc. Email him at mike@southsideartcenter.com.

Some Practical Advice on Making Community Television Accessible

BY CINDY COLVIN

*L*iving today gets so whirled around that the outlines of us spill over into our next scene with no real definition. Public Access TV expands our horizons without losing focus.

As a First Amendment right, we can use television as a forum to speak our minds and our hearts. But what happens when you are blind, deaf, hard of hearing, physically challenged, old? I hate the word handicapped. It sounds so permanent, so coddled. For many people their handicap is not the challenge of their condition, but the challenges that are imposed on them by the guy next to them, or the architecture of a building, or the attitude of everyone around them—the list goes on.

Where does Public access television come in? It's not the FCC Law that makes PEG and Public Access provide programming and/or participation. Why bother at all? We bother because it's education, information and socialization. And it's the best thing to do for the community we serve.

Long after the battles of running a station and its money, franchises, cable access, staff, equipment, housing, income versus outgo are reconciled, we are "out there" because we need someone to watch us, we need to fill that vacuum of time and information and education and personal creativity and entertainment. We have to have someone watch us in order for us to be there.

So, where to begin? Look at the physical plant, first. Can people who require accommodation get in your station? Can they go to the restroom and not require the "Jaws of Life" to get out? Can you teach them the skills they need to operate a camera, the editing suites? Can you put the teaching team together that will be able to meet the accommodation needs? Where on earth do you go for help?

As far as architecture, get the ADA guidelines from your city or county. Look for organizations within American Institute of Architects (www.aia.org) that specialize in rehab and volunteer serv-

es. Be logically creative and go to the home improvement store. It might be time to think about that building fund drive.

Look in the community that you serve. Start with organizations, special schools, and groups. Target one to start with. That will lead you to other groups that really want to join in, learn and play a part. There is nothing worse for the person with disabilities than sitting around being bored and boring.

Make a class design that will attract people to the classes. Your station must be accommodation friendly. Water bowls for the service dogs and a designated place to put that water. First floor rooms for teaching, editing and studio time. Lots of helpful signage. Lots of breaks. Fridges for medications. Displayed fire escape plans and staff assigned for help.

The classes are meant to encourage creativity through visual media and sound. It's our job to blend excitement with skill building. What do you do with a blind or deaf student? Do your editing stations and doors to the suites accommodate wheelchairs? Can you create a flexible learning environment? You can't do it all by yourself. Enlist the help of people experienced in those areas. How do they get paid? Some will volunteer their help, some will gladly accept membership at the station so they can produce, and some may be able to be paid through grants. It's all done through networking, just like the station and it gets you into the community.

Have a video festival for people who have a story to tell and just happen to be "handicapped." Make sure that those with no special needs are included with your accommodated people. When the education, information, and socialization gets going, it's hard to tell where the accommodation starts and stops.

Cindy Colvin, an independent film maker in Kemah, Texas, has worked in television/live event captioning for 10 years and is a stroke survivor.

Facíl

For more information or questions about Facíl
call Access Tucson at 520.624.9833.

After more than ten years of development and incorporating the input of PEG access centers across the country, Facíl has evolved into the most comprehensive and effective solution to the exceptional data management requirements of a media access center. Facíl is already serving over 90 organizations from coast to coast, recovering the staff time previously lost to paperwork and improving service levels.

Channel	Start	Length	Find	Project Title	Program ID	Episode	Program Title	A
62	Sat 05/26/06 00:00:00	0:22:18	187	Atanarjuat's People	9432	6	Atanarjuat's People	
62	Sat 05/26/06 00:22:18	0:22:18	1184	Re-enactment	9659	3	Sat 6 at a Ribbing	
62	Sat 05/26/06 00:44:36	0:22:18	187	Atanarjuat's People	9432	6	Atanarjuat's People	
62	Sat 05/26/06 01:06:54	0:20:00	200	Marshall Time	17663	3	Hawaiian Time	
62	Sat 05/26/06 01:26:54	0:20:00	3587	Kamen's Canyon Television of 22795	21	1	Hawaiian Oceanic Television of 22795	
62	Sat 05/26/06 01:46:54	0:20:00	1964	Atanarjuat's People	9659	3	Atanarjuat's People	
62	Sat 05/26/06 02:06:54	0:20:00	187	Atanarjuat's People	9432	6	Atanarjuat's People	
62	Sat 05/26/06 02:26:54	0:20:00	229	Atanarjuat's People	2291	1	Atanarjuat's People in the Classroom	
62	Sat 05/26/06 02:46:54	0:20:00	229	Atanarjuat's People	2291	1	Atanarjuat's People in the Classroom	
62	Sat 05/26/06 03:06:54	0:20:00	187	Atanarjuat's People	9432	6	Atanarjuat's People	
62	Sat 05/26/06 03:26:54	0:20:00	440	Atanarjuat's People	994	3	Atanarjuat's People, marquis, etc.	
62	Sat 05/26/06 03:46:54	0:20:00	187	Atanarjuat's People	9432	6	Atanarjuat's People	
62	Sat 05/26/06 04:06:54	0:20:00	187	Atanarjuat's People	9432	6	Atanarjuat's People	
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9:20-9:30 A	Karsten, Dan	1	Thatcher, Becky	1					
9:20-10:00 A	Karsten, Dan								
9:20-10:15 A	Karsten, Dan	Montague, Mickey J	Thatcher, Becky	1					
9:20-10:30 A	Karsten, Dan	Montague, Mickey J	Thatcher, Becky	1					
9:20-11:00 A	Karsten, Dan	Montague, Mickey J	Thatcher, Becky	1					
9:20-12:00 P	Karsten, Dan	Montague, Mickey J	Thatcher, Becky	1					
9:20-12:15 P	Karsten, Dan	Montague, Mickey J	Thatcher, Becky	1					
9:20-1:00 P	Karsten, Dan	1	Thatcher, Becky	1					
9:20-1:30 P	Karsten, Dan	1	Thatcher, Becky	1					
9:20-2:00 P	Conrad, Tyann	Kirk, James I							
9:20-3:00 P	Conrad, Tyann	Kirk, James I	Conrad, Tyann Jr.	1					
9:20-3:30 P	Conrad, Tyann	Kirk, James I	Conrad, Tyann Jr.	1					
9:20-4:00 P	Conrad, Tyann	Kirk, James I	Conrad, Tyann Jr.	1					
9:20-5:00 P	Conrad, Tyann	Kirk, James I	Conrad, Tyann Jr.	1					
9:20-6:00 P	Conrad, Tyann	Kirk, James I	Conrad, Tyann Jr.	1					
9:20-6:30 P	Conrad, Tyann	Kirk, James I	Conrad, Tyann Jr.	1					
9:20-7:00 P	Conrad, Tyann	Kirk, James I	Conrad, Tyann Jr.	1					
9:20-7:30 P	Conrad, Tyann	Kirk, James I	Conrad, Tyann Jr.	1					

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Closed Captioning Creates Opportunities for Savvy Community Media Centers

BY GREG VAWTER

In 1993, the Federal Communications Commission ruled that all full-sized TV sets sold in the US must incorporate closed captioning. In 1998, the FCC required broadcasters to encode all new programs. As a result, closed captioning of broadcast television channels became available to just about everyone.

Hillsborough County was one of the first in the nation to provide captioning on cable for deaf and hearing-impaired viewers of government television. In 1993, the county began training court stenographers for the work. HTV22 now employs two realtime captioners full time. Contract captioners cover staff vacations and other leave.

HTV22's video signal includes real time captioning during all live coverage of county meetings. As staff captioners "write" every word they hear in real time, their text is encoded onto scan line 21 of the video. This combined signal is carried to cable subscribers throughout Hillsborough County as our channel, so viewers can see the text by turning captioning "ON."

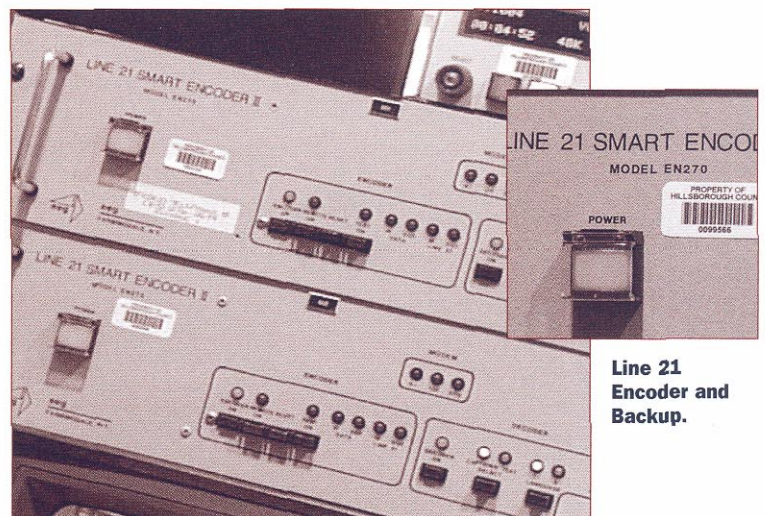
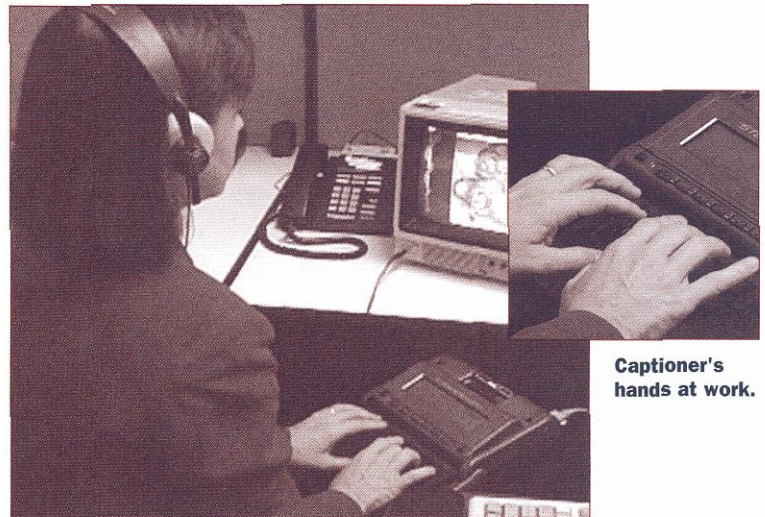
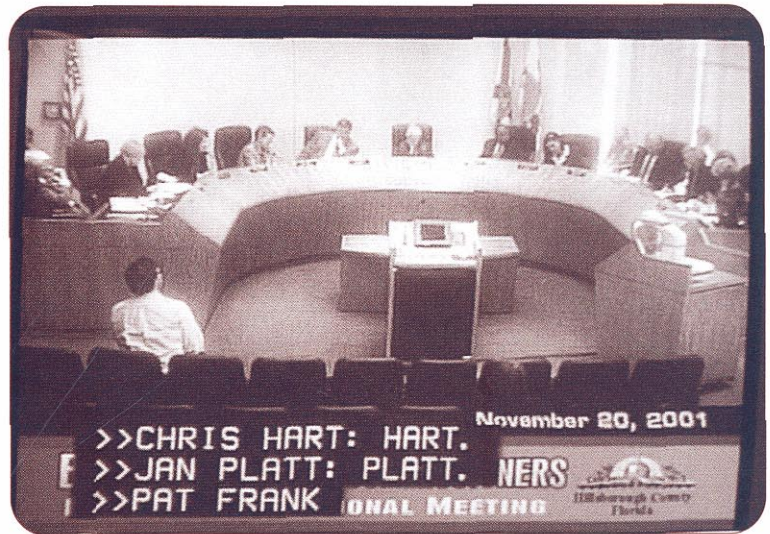
This service has made a difference for many people who are deaf, hard of hearing and/or non-native English speakers. But, people have found unexpected uses for captioning, regardless of their abilities to hear.

HTV22 leaves captioning "ON" in Hillsborough County meeting rooms because people often rely on the text to catch what was just said at the dais. Petitioners and their representatives, county staff and other interested residents have called for captioning text so often that we now post it on the web. Anyone can download searchable text from any televised meeting, usually within hours of the closing gavel from an internet connection. Just go to www.HTV22.org and click CAPTIONING.

Although specifically not an official record, captioning has occasionally been quoted in subsequent meetings, since our accuracy nears 99 percent of verbatim. In fact, our county clerk's office refers to the HTV22 captioning as they develop the official minutes of BOCC meetings.

In cooperation with the county's Information & Technology Services Department, HTV22 now indexes the captioning of county commission meetings as searchable text encoded with MPEG files. This Virage metadata is stored on internal servers, so county officials can find a key name or other word and start the video (on their PC) from that point of the meeting. Our service is not yet available on the internet, but keep checking our website. The future looks promising for captioning and computer technology to serve specific needs and our whole community.

Greg Vawter is station manager of HTV22 in Hillsborough County, Florida. Contact him through www.HTV22.org



**A VITAL
INVITATION**

For more than 12 years, the Alliance for Communications Democracy has been fighting to preserve and strengthen access. Though the odds against us have been high, and the mega-media, corporate foes well-heeled and powerful, time and again we've won in the courts. We can't continue this critical work without your support. With the ramifications of the 1996 Telecommunications Act manifesting themselves, and new legislation on the horizon, we must be vigilant if we are to prevail and preserve democratic communications. If not us, who? If not now, when? Please join the Alliance for Communications Democracy today!

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Become an Alliance Subscriber for \$350/year and receive detailed reports on current court cases threatening access, pertinent historical case citations, and other Alliance for Communications Democracy activities.

- Voting membership open to non-profit access operations for an annual contribution of \$3,000.
- Associate, Supporter and Subscriber memberships available to organizations and individuals at the following levels:
 - Alliance Associate, \$2500 - copies of all briefs and reports.
 - Alliance Supporter, \$500 - copies of all reports and enclosures.
 - Alliance Subscriber, \$350 - copies of all reports.

Direct membership inquiries to ACD Treasurer Rob Brading, Multnomah Community Television, 26000 SE Stark St., Gresham, OR 97038, telephone 503.667.7636, or email at rbrading@mctv.org

The Shape of Things to Come

Grand Rapids Community Media Center



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Fitchburg, Massachusetts Show Speaks to the Deaf Community

BY MARK ROCHELEAU

At Fitchburg Access Television, Inc., Fitchburg, MA, we have opened ourselves up to the deaf community. Earlier this year, Matt Calamare, a deaf student at Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School, came to us to talk about local access television and the deaf community in the Fitchburg area.

One of Matt's interests involved making FATV's current programming more accessible for the deaf. He wanted to get captioning equipment for FATV since most of the shows on access are not captioned, but as many access operators know, captioning costs and grants are difficult to come by.

When Matt expressed interest in learning television production, I began teaching him camcorders and editing in a one-on-one setting using a dry erase board. None of our staff had any knowledge of sign language, but with Matt's help and the use of the internet, I learned enough sign to communicate.

Since that time, Matt has begun producing his own show. It is a weekly program dedicated to deaf issues. He costars with Raquel Perez, another deaf student at Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School. Raquel's brother, Julio, runs the control room when we do the show. Matt's deaf and

hearing friends crew the show.

The way Matt tells it: "After becoming a member [of FATV] and learning to use the equipment, I began to produce a show called *Deaf Today*. Within a few weeks, Raquel Perez joined me as a co-host and I changed the name to *The Raquel & Matt Show*. My show is a talk show. We talk about deaf culture, but we

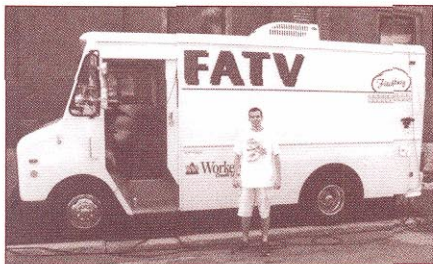
also talk about local (Fitchburg) events. Sometimes we have an interpreter for people who don't know ASL, but not always. My friends at Monty Tech say

'it's a cool idea about the show' and my teacher said 'it's a good idea and would be great to tour a deaf event with a camera so people can see what goes on.'"

Matt has also helped FATV produce numerous live community events as well as live weekly programs as a graphics operator. He's currently a sophomore at Montachusett and plans to attend Gallaudet University (the world's only college for deaf and hard of hearing students) after graduation.

Heads up to local access in the Washington D.C. area—there's an enthusiastic, highly motivated, and skilled local access producer with ideas for an access TV show for the deaf community soon to be on his way to your town!

Mark Rocheleau is executive director of Fitchburg Access Television, Inc., Fitchburg, MA. Contact him at mark@fatv.org



Test Your Homepage's Accessibility

How well does your access center's homepage support accessibility? Here's a quick list some free web software tools designed to help you assure the accessibility of your webpage for people with disabilities:

A-Prompt (<http://aprompt.snow.utoronto.ca/>) is free PC software that tests your site for accessibility and guides you through any necessary code corrections.

Bobby, the Center for Applied Special Technology product designed for testing single pages for accessibility problems, was acquired by Watchfire in September 2002. Watchfire is continuing the free single page testing service at <http://bobby.watchfire.com/bobby/>.

World Wide Web Consortium HTML Validation Service (<http://validator.w3.org/>) allows you to test your website for compliance with the World Wide Web Consortium's HTML recommendations.

Call for Articles

Winter 2002
Community Media Review

WORKING TITLE:

Political and Governmental Uses of Community Media

The winter CMR will look at political and government uses of community media at all levels of government, local state and federal, and across public, educational and government access. Topics for articles include (but not necessarily limited to):

- ▲ Federal, state and local government use of community media.
- ▲ Profiles of Politicians that use/appear on access.
- ▲ Testimonial sidebars from politicians about community media. (Suggestions of politicians who support/use access wanted!)
- ▲ Election 2002 and PEG.
- ▲ Descriptions of locally and in-house produced political shows.
- ▲ Profiles of governmental organizations (on all levels) that produce programming for PEG. (On the federal level this could include the Dept. of Education, NASA, Army Newswatch, FEMA; on the local level this could programming done by the city government, the local fire dept., etc.)
- ▲ Commentary on government organization programming.
- ▲ Challenges in covering politics and producing political shows.
- ▲ Research on politicians using community media.
- ▲ Viewpoints on politicians and PEG from outside organizations such as League of Women Voters, Common Cause.
- ▲ Legal Issues surrounding politicians and access. (i.e. How far can politicians go? Can they solicit votes? Can they solicit campaign donations?) A look at what policies work.
- ▲ Looking ahead into the future. What will community media and politics/gov'n't look like in 10 years.

Please pass along any suggestions of individuals or organizations that would make a good contribution to this issue.

To propose an article for the next *Community Media Review*, please send an email to Heidi Grace at government@alliancecm.org.

Deadline for article submission-December 15, 2002. All articles selected will need to be submitted electronically and we need photographs and graphics to accompany selected pieces.

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Celebrate Diversity

Reports from the Alliance for Community Media 2002 International Conference and Trade Show, July 10-13, Houston, Texas

The 26th annual Alliance for Community Media International Conference and Trade Show held this past July in Houston was a huge success amidst pleasant Houston summer weather, a first-ever run of webcast conference, great food and a festive Hometown Video Festival.

Over 450 attended some 60 workshops and special sessions.

Workshop participants praised Alan McKenzie (WFAA FOX affiliate, Dallas, TX) for his outstanding presentation of production skills. General comments favored other such workshops for future conferences. Once again, the Trade Show vendors enjoyed the benefits of breakfast visitors.

High points of the conference began with the International Reception at the 'Old World' Paraiso Maravilla, site of frequent Hollywood location filming.

Little Hands Theater, five youngsters from Illuminations Theater With The Deaf, who signed the national anthem in American Sign Language, opened the conference.

The keynote address by Larry Irving, heard for the first time at an Alliance conference over the internet, addressed electronic commerce, the global information infrastructure and its impact on various socio-economic groups. Equal Opportunity Chair Richard Turner, calling from Hawaii, commented on the "wonderful keynote speech, live on the internet!"

The Awards Luncheon recognized the City of McMinnville, Oregon with the George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communication; Erik Mollberg with the Buske Leadership Award; and Onida Coward Mayers with the Jewel Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity. The *Hometown Video Festival* celebrated local programming and all of our independent videographers with dinner, music and dancing in a relaxed and informal atmosphere.

Closing day breakfast featured Amy Goodman (right), host and co-producer of *Democracy Now! DN!* is the national, listener-sponsored public radio and TV show, pioneering the largest community media collaboration in the country. The national news show brings the voices of those on the fringe to the airwaves.

From Lin Gold's Youth Video Camp came the comment from a three-year veteran, "this is the best camp ever!"

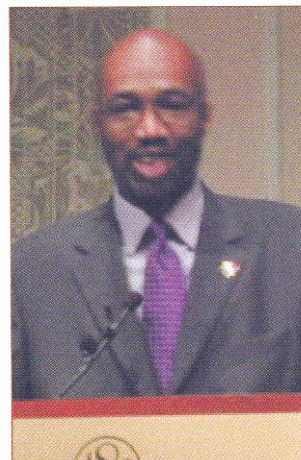
Attendees were also treated to a networking luncheon at the exclusive University Club in the Galleria and, later, to the Latin-influenced Reggae Hip Hop band, *Counter Intelligence*, for the 'Celebrate Diversity' wrap-up!

Stories and pictures from the conference follow.

Plans are already underway for the Alliance's 2003 International Conference and Trade Show, July 9-12, in Tacoma, Washington. Check the Alliance website at www.alliancecm.org for updates.



Calling access television the "town square where people can come together," Larry Irving (r) provided the keynote for the conference. Irving, president of the Irving Information Group, was formerly Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information in the Clinton Administration, where he was a principal advisor to the President, Vice President, and Secretary of Commerce.



McMinnville, OR; Möllberg; and Coward Mayers Receive Alliance's Highest Awards at Conference

BY BILL KIRKPATRICK

Awards luncheons are one of the few perfectly designed aspects of modern organizational life: the team event with no downside. At an awards luncheon there are no forced retreats in the itchy wilderness, no painful paintball, no breakout rooms—just an hour of accentuating the positive, motivating by example, and of course chowing down. What's not to like?

At the awards luncheon in Houston this year, the positive energy was as strong as ever. As Paul Berg put it, the luncheon is held to recognize leaders and activists at the grassroots level for their dedication to PEG access, and attendees caught the spirit of that leadership throughout the hour as awards were presented to Erik Möllberg, Onida Coward Mayers, and the city of McMinnville, Oregon.

Following introductions by Bunnie Riedel and Paul Berg, just as the waiters were whisking away the cake plates, the presentations began with a charming videotape about McMinnville's not-so-charming battle for access against uncooperative corporate monolith AT&T. This city of 26,499 southwest of Portland, Oregon struggled for two years to get a franchise agreement favorable to access,

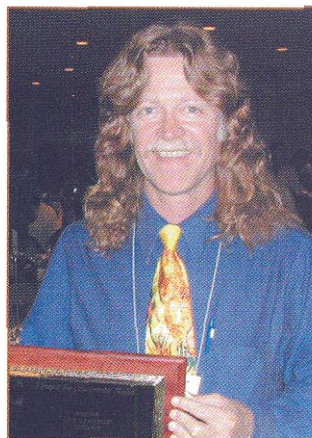


Jerry Eichten (l) and Rick Olson (r) accepted the George Stoney (c) Award for Humanistic Communications on behalf of McMinnville, OR.

finally succeeding in early 2001. As Bunnie Riedel put it, "It's difficult and scary for small communities to stand up to multi-national corporations with endless deep pockets. The regulatory commission and city council [of McMinnville] showed a tremendous

amount of courage in insisting on support for PEG." Rob Brading of Portland, Oregon presented the George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communications to Jerry Eichten and Rick Olson on behalf of the citizens of McMinnville. Eichten is executive director of McMinnville Community Media, while Olson is a city council member who was central to the negotiations with AT&T. In their acceptance speech, Eichten and Olson credited citizen involvement for their victory as the one indispensable element in trying to win a fair deal from a hostile cable operator.

Alan Bushong of Salem, Oregon presented the next award, the Sue Buske Leadership Award, to Erik Möllberg of Access Fort Wayne. Among other positions, Möllberg has served as chair of the Central States Region. Bushong recounted in humorous detail Möllberg's goodwill trek around Indiana when he first moved to the state, getting to know the people in his region; once again, the key



Erik Möllberg, Buske Leadership Award recipient.

take-away lesson was that access is all about people and relationships, a truth that Möllberg both understands and helps propagate. The warmth in the room for Erik was palpable, and his genuine goodness and sense of humor came through both his own speech and the anecdotes that others recounted about him. At the same time, it's not only about niceness: as Riedel put it, "Erik is an exceptional leader," who distinguished himself as chair of regional chairs by navigating the organization through a serious financial crisis.

Finally, following another excellent video introduction, Tony Riddle, formerly of Manhattan Neighborhood Network, presented the Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity to Onida Coward Mayers, founding director of Brooklyn Community Access Television (BCAT). In his heartfelt prefatory remarks, Riddle noted Coward Mayers' "majestic ability to sort through the complexities" in order to provide news and local programming to Brooklyn. A "delightful person and a visionary," as Riedel calls her, Coward Mayers not only leads BCAT and hosts an award-winning public affairs show, but also finds time to teach at the college level and serve on several advisory boards for media and the arts in New York. In her moving speech, Onida thanked Tony Riddle for his inspiration and expressed respect for Jewell Ryan-White's approach to cultural diversity, which she characterized as fairness and a willingness to fight for one's beliefs. Onida gave full credit to her remarkable staff, and encouraged everyone involved in PEG access to take responsibility for cultural diversity not just in our centers, but also in our lives.



Onida Coward Mayers, recipient of the Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity.

In addition to these key awards, the luncheon included the announcement of the Director's Choice Awards, which went to the public access center in Indianapolis, IN, Prometheus Radio Project, Rep. Danny Davis, Sen. E. Fritz Hollings, Houston Media Source, and Steve Fortriede. The luncheon was sponsored by Annenberg/CPB.

Bill Kirkpatrick is a doctoral candidate in Media and Cultural Studies of the Department of Communication Arts at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Email: mwkirkpa@students.wisc.edu

Hometown Hollywood

2002 Hometown Video Festival Goes Tinsel Town

BY JIM ELLINGER

This year's Alliance for Community Media's *Hometown Video Festival* took on a bit of the Tinsel Town razzle-dazzle, with tongue firmly placed in chic.

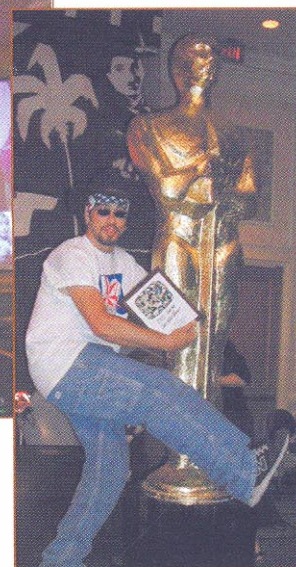
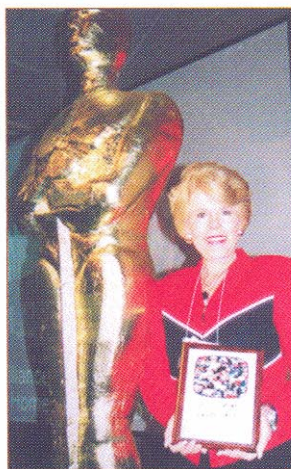
The main ballroom of Houston's Westin Galleria, site of this year's conference, was lavishly decorated with glittery movie-style decorations, including two enormous Oscar-like statues flanking the stage.

While a few conference goers may have missed the point of the faux Hollywood glamour ("but, but, we're access!") by the end of the evening nary a nay-sayer was to be found in the crowd of more than 500 attendees.

Virtually everyone was attired in his or her favorite party duds, but some folks, notably winners, were decked out to the nines. (Who would have thought an access producer could afford a tux?) It was fun to check out who was checking out whom.

In addition to a buffet that was both beautiful to behold as well as to devour, the entertainment included Eve Myles, a sketch artist. All evening long, without ever losing a smile, this talented woman drew scores of clever caricatures of goofing conference goers, many with drinks in hand. One notable achievement was her group drawing of more than a dozen of the Arcadian access folks. (Later, seeing the all tens and twenties crammed in her tip jar, I knew of at least one reason she was wearing a smile all night...)

The entire event was cablecast live to the Houston television audience on Houston's We The People TV. And in a first for any Alliance conference the awards



the stage. I learned that local interns Jackie Galvan and Rudy Garza manned this camera.

Debbie Mason from

Dallas Access and I served as talent on the pre-awards show program and went to the stage for the awards ceremony. Interviewing scores of producers and winners from across the country was both challenging and fun.

Congratulations to all this year's winners, and thanks to the Houston MediaSource crew for putting together a great awards night!

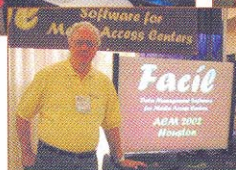
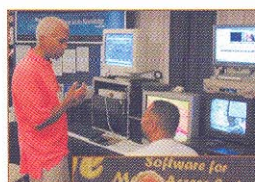
Okay Tacoma! Let's see what you have for us in 2003!

Jim Ellinger is the former media/market-ing guy for Austin Community Access Center, the Austin Music Network, KOOP-FM Radio, the Austin Chronicle and other community and co-op media groups in the Texas capital. He currently labors at Houston MediaSource.

show was streamed worldwide on the net via EarthWire.net. We learned later that the program received a good many hits and was apparently quite popular in the Hawaiian Islands. (What, you guys are getting tired of watching the sunsets?)

The entire cable/web casts went out with hardly a hitch. Of the four camera shots, my favorite was the "long shot" from the back of the ballroom showing the entire scene. It showed hundreds of folks applauding the winners as they took

The growing Trade Show at the Alliance conference attracted 43 vendors and hundreds of visitors. A tradeshow breakfast hosted by TargetVision opened the show. Platinum Sponsor Matrox Digital Video Solutions helped the tradeshow be a vibrant, well attended event. Trade Show Council members (an advisory group of industry professionals) included James Harvey (Framerate), Lynn Melos (TargetVision), Jeff Possanza (Leightronix), Paulina Aguilar (RIFNet) and Andrew Starks (Tightrope Media Systems).



Webcast a First at an Alliance Conference

BY BETTY FRANCIS

I couldn't go to conference this year. My kids' summer camp schedule made it impossible for me to attend. So you can imagine how happy I was to hear from Houston MediaSource [HMS] that the conference would be webcast!

Marshall Parker, HMS program development director, confessed that the idea to webcast came up during a brainstorming session at Houston MediaSource. "There had been some discussion early at HMS as to what we might do to make this a conference one that stands out from others", he said. "Video streaming was on our wish list. I kept pursuing individuals who might have some expertise asking, 'How can we make this happen?' I got lucky with an underground internet radio group who wanted to make the jump to video."

This was an exciting turn of events for Bunnie Riedel, executive director of the Alliance. "I was very excited because webcasting is something we've been talking about doing, but we just didn't have the financial resources to make it a reality."

The underground internet radio group HMS hooked up with Earthwire.net. Located within blocks of HMS, the two organizations have a certain amount of overlap in their volunteer base. There is a similarity of goals as well, as Earthwire.net's fundamental goal is to promote creative and political expression by ensuring community access to media and encouraging a sense of community among activists and artists.

The opening and closing ceremonies, *Hometown Video Festival*, and keynote luncheon were selected for webcast. "These (events) were chosen," said Marshall, "because we knew that we would be able to have video equipment in place for them to be presented live." HMS built a control room in a hotel storage room for video production and carried the programs live on its We The People Television Public Access channel. Earthwire.net was then able to pick up the signal off of Time Warner and converted the programs into a QuickTime format.

According to M. Martin, founder and executive director of EarthWire.net, viewership for the webcast averaged out to about 50 hits per day, and the response was overwhelmingly positive. "The feedback I got mostly consisted of Alliance conference attendees visiting the Earthwire booth at the trade show, who had associates "back home" watching the webcast. The typical comment would be something along the lines of "...oh, yeah, my (fill in the blank—production manager, secretary, whatever) watched the webcast last night. They said it was really (smooth, clean, intelligible, whatever)..."

Bunnie Riedel received positive feedback from several people who were unable to attend the conference. Lee Ann Small, assistant director at Malden Access Television in Malden, Massachusetts, was one of them. "I wasn't able to attend the conference this year but I was able to watch the keynote luncheon on the web...Larry Irving was a very good choice. And watching Dirk Koning being carried off the stage by all those access folks was, well let's just say I chuckled about that one all afternoon."

Michael Webber, operations manager at Foxboro Cable Access

in Foxboro, Massachusetts, shared Lee Ann's sentiments. "I really enjoy the Alliance conferences, but just could not make it this year. I was very excited to learn that parts of the conference would be streamed on the web live. This gave me the opportunity to catch the always interesting and motivational speeches from

Bunnie and a glimpse at some of the great volunteer produced programs at the awards festival. There is so much going on in the PEG community from public policy issues to local concerns. It's more important than ever to keep ourselves informed and involved with the Alliance. A big thanks to those people who made the live web-stream possible!"

Steve Bartlebaugh, executive director of the Evanston Community Media Center in Evanston, Illinois, caught most of the keynote luncheon and also some of the Hometown Awards.

"I really appreciated the ability to watch the streaming. The night of the awards, I saw the pre-show interviews. There was a young guy from Chicago who got interviewed. It was neat to see someone local at the conference (even if he was a Cubs fan!). I went out to dinner and left the stream going via my cable modem. When I got home, they had just announced our local winner. It was very cool to hear that, since we did not send a representative this year."

Mike Rhodes, editor of *Community Alliance* magazine, watched some of the Thursday evening webcast from home in Fresno, California. "It was interesting for me to see some of the participants who I know by name, speaking at the convention. Bunnie Riedel is a very energetic and passionate spokesperson for the Alliance. I would not have known that if I did not watch the broadcast. It is one thing to read reports about the conference but another to see it on the Internet. Since I was not able to attend in person, it was good to have had this opportunity to follow what was going on. It made me feel much closer to the organization, and I feel like I have a better sense of what it would have been like to be there. There is just something about the added dimension of sight and sound that makes this all more real. The experience makes it more likely that I will attend the next conference."

M. Martin of EarthWire.net also has plans to set up site to showcase community access programming on the web. "I was very encouraged by the depth of interest shown by virtually all conference attendees in webcasting," he said. "Setting up a showcase site would make it possible to accept tape submissions now from community broadcasters that may be years away from being able to use the technology themselves. If at all possible, I hope to be able to provide webcasting and other services at the conference next year in Tacoma."

My personal thanks to everyone who made it possible for me to share in the conference from my desktop—Marshall Parker and all the staff at Houston MediaSource, M. Martin and the Earthwire.net staff, and CEO Chris Hutto of PerplexCity.com, EarthWire.net's technology partner and ISP. I've bookmarked the HMS.EarthWire.net site. This could be the start of something big!

Betty Francis is a member of the Community Media Review Editorial Board. She can be reached at bfrancis@mc.cc.md.us.

**'It is
one thing to
read reports about
the conference but
another to see it
on the Internet.'**

Expanded White Paper Sessions at Houston

'Re-thinking Access Philosophy' Sparks Spirited Discussion

BY JOHN W. HIGGINS

Approximately 70 people participated in spirited discussions about access philosophy and practices in three 2002 White Paper sessions in Houston, "Re-Thinking Access Philosophy." The sessions were coordinated with articles in the summer 2002 issue of *Community Media Review*.

White Paper sessions focus on explor-



ing and challenging long-held beliefs and values in access, and typically feature a single presenter focusing on a particular concept or idea within access. Philosophical and introspective approaches are encouraged by presenters and session participants from the worlds of community media and academics, with an interactive format.

The Houston sessions utilized a variety of approaches: a single presentation followed by discussion; several presentations followed by small group discussions; and several presentations followed by limited discussion.

Session One

Session one featured Dirk Koning, executive director of the Community Media Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan, presenting the paper "First Come, First Served: Last One Standing." Koning outlined the cable industry's argument that access violates Fifth Amendment guarantees against taking property without compensation. He also addressed First Amendment fundamentals: problems caused by "First Come, First Served," as

well as possible procedures that might provide solutions for the issue.

Participants provided an overview of perspectives regarding access-related philosophical issues: additional practical alternatives to problems raised by "first come, first served"; expanding access philosophy to broadband and international arenas; proactive approaches related to outreach and developing diversity;

and distinctions between the franchise geographic area and the "community" area of shared interests.

Session Two

Session two continued the discussion, addressing many of the issues defined earlier. Pat Garlinghouse of

Houston MediaSource; Paul Congo of Access Monterey Peninsula (California); and Dee Dee Halleck of the University of California San Diego and Paper Tiger TV led small group discussions based on interests defined during the two sessions. Garlinghouse and Congo presented viewpoints on "First Come, First Served" from the perspective of the access manager looking for practical solutions.

Halleck focused on the international perspectives necessary for Americans to understand the viewpoints of the rest of the world, with public access as an aid to understanding and peace. She identified collaborations possible between access and the Indy Media Center Movement (www.indy-media.org), and urged participants to become involved in the

International Telecommunication Union's meeting in Geneva in December 2003. "The lesson of September 11," she said, "is that we have to think about stuff outside the U.S.—to think about communication rights around the world."

Session Three

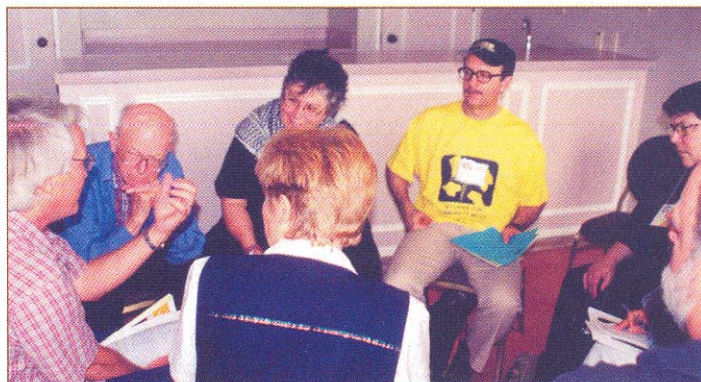
Session three, with a more academic bent, focused on a variety of topics: the Internet and public access; interpretations of the First Amendment as related to access; recent collaborations between students in a university course and educational access; and an exploration of the collective vision implied with "community," and "local." Presenters included: Laura R. Linder, University of North Carolina at Greensboro; Rob Huesca, Trinity University in San Antonio; John Higgins, Menlo College in Atherton, California; and Bill Kirkpatrick, University of Wisconsin at Madison.

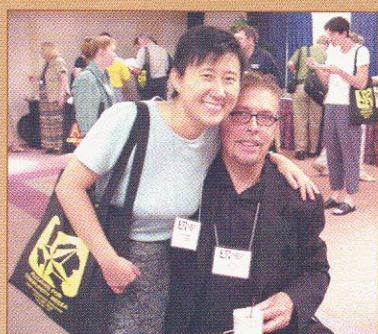
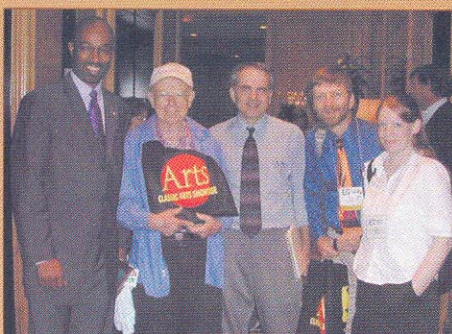
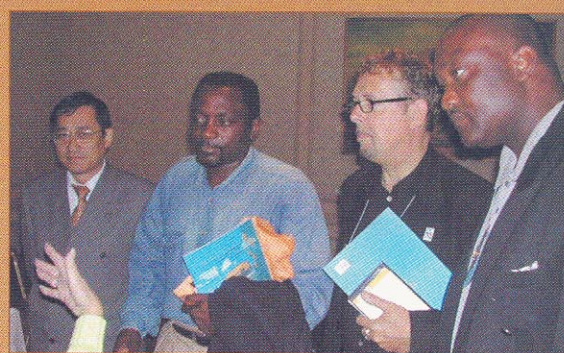
Assisting with arrangements were Naresh Copeland and Eddie Shannon from Houston MediaSource.

Tacoma 2003: Call for Contributions

In addition to appearing in the summer 2002 issue of *CMR*, many of the White Paper presentations are available on the White Paper website: <http://faculty.menlo.edu/~jhiggins/acmwhitepaper>. The site includes a call for papers, essays, and presentations for White Paper sessions at the Alliance 2003 national conference in Tacoma, Washington.

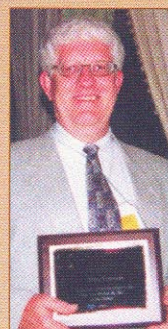
John Higgins is a member of the COMMUNITY MEDIA REVIEW Editorial Board. Contact him at jhiggins@menlo.edu.





Memories of Houston

Special thanks to photographers Jeff Hansell, Melissa Mills, Jim Ellinger and Mary Lou Bigelow.



Full Circle

'...I returned to Cape Cod with further resolve, enthusiasm and commitment to make Educational access television in my hometown a success.'

BY DAVID ALLEN LAVENDER

Seventeen months ago, I was hired by Falmouth (MA) Community Television (FCTV-13) and the local public school system to develop, essentially from scratch, an Educational access channel. My 19 years in broadcast news, most recently with the NBC affiliate in Providence, Rhode Island left me with more than an adequate background to assume such a responsibility. Or so I thought...

Enter the Alliance for Community Media Conference in Washington D.C. in July of 2001. What was originally perceived as little more than a networking and info-gathering trip to our nation's capital turned out to be perhaps the most eye-opening, often intimidating, but overall inspirational four days since entering the business in 1983. I discovered an entirely new and exciting world of television, where creativity, artistic satisfaction and career enrichment were, for me, virtually unlimited. Not to mention the wealth of diversified, entertaining and informative programming being offered, both on tape and via satellite. Time and money well spent, I vowed to attend the following year.

Houston in July...what more can be said? If you're a runner like me, you start no later than 5:30 a.m. or forget it: heat and humidity redefined...thunder/lightning storms of almost biblical proportions.

Day one (Thursday, July 11 due to a late flight) included the first exhaustive perusal of the trade show, later the opening ceremony and my first workshop of the conference: Making Sense of Satellites. I currently downlink both the Annenberg Channel and NASA TV, with Classic Arts Showcase to be added late in August. These channels are carried as a direct result of my attending the Alliance conference.

After the keynote luncheon and the "Educational Technology" workshop, fellow space enthusiast Kohel Haver (incidentally the instructor who imparted the sobering reality of copyright Issues to me

last year) and I made a brief jaunt to the Johnson Space Center. There, clad in regulation shuttle flight suit, I again tried my hand as on-camera pitchman promoting the NASA Channel on TV-14. Although reasonably successful despite a late afternoon downpour, Brokaw has no cause for concern.

Later, the Westin's 23rd floor was host to the New England Regional Meeting where I at last had the privilege of shop-talk with Executive Director, Tireless Cheerleader and Undisputed Diva of the conference, Bunnie Riedel. I can think of no one more uniquely qualified to promote the agenda of the Alliance and help protect its future. Bunnie in '04...

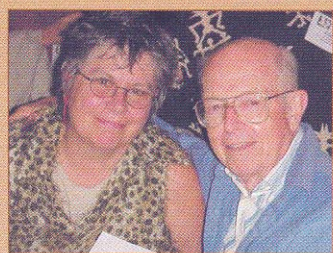
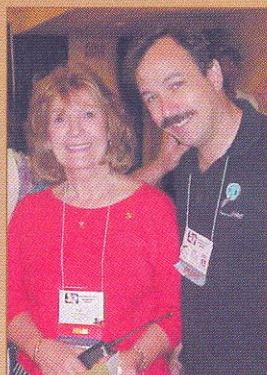
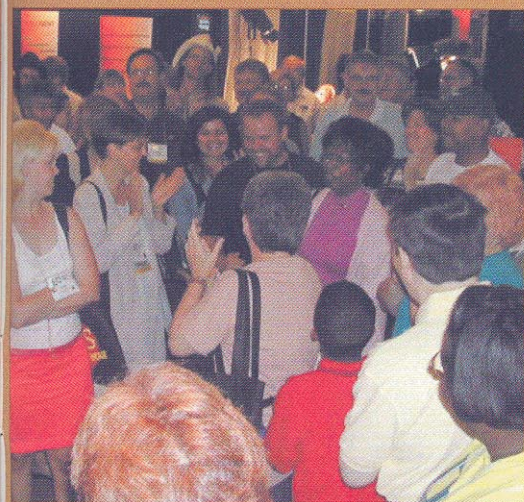
Friday began with yet another tour of the trade show followed by, what was for me, the most valuable workshop of the bunch: Promoting The Hell Out of Your Program. My approach, as well as my priorities concerning both program and channel promotion, will be much more structured and defined in the season to come.

Following the awards luncheon, I split 50/50 between "Free or At Cost Programming" (most of which I now subscribe to) and "Emerging Technologies." So many workshops, so little time...

Finally, although the New England Regional Meeting at 3:45 was geared mainly to the PEG access executive directors in attendance, it was well worth sitting in. A most enjoyable evening was later spent at the Hometown Video Festival.

Thanks again to the Alliance for Community Media and all who were involved in this year's Houston conference, I returned to Cape Cod with further resolve, enthusiasm and commitment to make Educational access television in my hometown a success. Yes, these are the schools I attended throughout my youth. I have indeed come full circle.

David Allen Lavender is educational access manager at TV-14 in Falmouth, Mass. Reprinted with permission of the Northeast Region.



On behalf of the entire management and staff of EARTHWIRE.NET, I wish to thank the ALLIANCE FOR COMMUNITY MEDIA and HOUSTON MEDIASOURCE for the opportunity to be of service at the recent ACM Conference and Trade Show. It was very gratifying to spend an entire three days working and exchanging ideas with people who truly understand the value and power of media as a tool for building and empowering communities. EarthWire is a new organization working within a new media, but the culture and ideas that form the basis for that media are nothing new. We welcome the opportunity to work with individuals and groups who have spent decades building that culture and bringing those ideas to fruition. I would like to take this opportunity to share with you all a few thoughts on what EarthWire is, tell you about projects we're working on....and tell you how very much I look forward to seeing all of you again next year in Tacoma.



Sincerely,
M. Martin
Executive Director
EarthWire.net

About EarthWire.net

EarthWire is the latest incarnation of an alternative community-access media project begun in 1998 by a coalition of activists, artists, and free-speech advocates.

The earliest version of the project was called "Radio Free Montrose," taking its name from the eclectic inner-city neighborhood that gave it birth. Radio Free Montrose was part of the grassroots movement started in Berkeley by Stephen Dunifer to use low-powered FM radio as a tool for community empowerment.

The FCC's interest in accommodating this movement was lukewarm at best. Rather than deal with the restrictions and limitations of the LPFM licensing category eventually offered to the community radio movement, Radio Free Montrose re-christened itself "First Amendment Internet Radio" and became one of the first community-access webcasters in the United States.

In 2001, First Amendment Internet Radio acquired a new name, a new facility, and a new purpose. As EarthWire.net, our mission is to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the Internet for creative and political expression outside the narrow confines of the corporate-dominated mainstream. In so doing, we feel we are participating in a time-honored tradition that is at the very core of the roleplayed by media in a diverse and democratic society.

EarthWire.net is actively seeking partners, sponsors, and affiliates nationally and internationally. To find out more about EarthWire and how you can become involved, email us at info@earthwire.net, or use the mail in form to the right of this page.

EarthWire.net, Inc.
2402 Waugh Drive
Houston, TX 77006
713.527.8453
info@earthwire.net

Streaming Video Workshop

ACM SW Regional Conference & Trade Show Fayetteville, Arkansas- Oct 10th thru 12th

EarthWire Executive Director M. Martin will be in attendance and presenting a workshop on streaming video technologies. Find out how your organization can take advantage of this exciting technology!

Best of PEG- COMING SOON

<http://BestOfPEG.EarthWire.net>

If there is one thing we ALL understand, it is the frustration of trying to adopt new technologies on an old-technology budget. Starting in 2003, EarthWire.net and Houston Media Source will be joining forces to provide a "sneak preview" of the power of webcasting to our associates in the public media community.

We are now accepting submissions for BEST OF P.E.G, an on-line showcase of community broadcasters from across America. For submission guidelines and details, contact us at BestOfPEG@EarthWire.net

Convergence in Action

EarthWire.net, KPFT-FM, and Houston MediaSource present THE WIRE

Starting this fall, EarthWire.net, Houston MediaSource and Pacifica affiliate KPFT-FM are proud to present a profoundly unique collaboration. THE WIRE will be presented on Houston MediaSource as a one hour video magazine featuring taped performances from the EarthWire.net stage featuring artists, poets, and musicians from Houston's thriving creative community. Concurrently, we will be launching an audio clip program on KPFT showcasing the same innovative performances.

"H-town," as we like to call it, has one of the most ethnically, culturally, and stylistically diverse creative communities in America. Presentations on THE WIRE will range from hip-hop to alt-country to *rock en espanol* to spoken word to bluegrass--sometimes all in the same performance! Tune in, and see what the "City on the Bayou" has to offer!



Find out more about EarthWire.net and community webcasting. clip and mail to EarthWire.net, 2404 Waugh Drive, Houston, TX 77006 - or complete form on-line at www.earthwire.net/CMR.

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Title	<input type="text"/>
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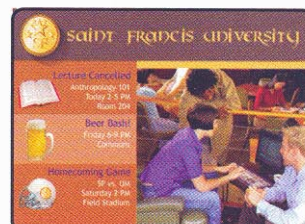
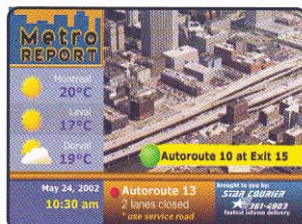
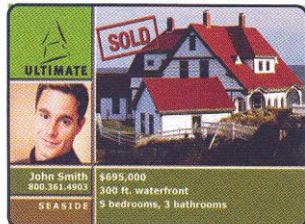
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